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THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
LORD MACAULAY

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THE COMPLETE WORKS
OF
LORD MACAULAY

WYCHERLEY

WHITEHALL EDITION

The Miscellaneous Works

OF

LORD MACAULAY

EDITED BY HIS SISTER

LADY TREVELYAN

VOLUME V.

ILLUSTRATED

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
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CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

CONTRIBUTED TO

"THE EDINBURGH REVIEW"

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

CONTRIBUTED TO

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW

LORD CLIVE. (JANUARY, 1840.)

The Life of Robert Lord Clive; collected from the Family Papers communicated by the Earl of Powis. By MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN MALCOLM, K.C.B. 3 vols., 8vo. London: 1836.

WE have always thought it strange that, while the history of the Spanish empire in America is familiarly known to all the nations of Europe, the great actions of our countrymen in the East should, even among ourselves, excite little interest. Every schoolboy knows who imprisoned Montezuma, and who strangled Atahualpa. But we doubt whether one in ten, even among English gentlemen of highly cultivated minds, can tell who won the battle of Buxar, who perpetrated the massacre of Patna, whether Surajah Dowlah ruled in Oude or in Travancore, or whether Holkar was a Hindoo or a Mussulman. Yet the

victories of Cortez were gained over savages who had no letters; who were ignorant of the use of metals; who had not broken in a single animal to labor; who wielded no better weapons than those which could be made out of sticks, flints, and fish-bones; who regarded a horse-soldier as a monster, half man and half beast; who took an arquebusier for a sorcerer, able to scatter the thunder and lightning of the skies. The people of India, when we subdued them, were ten times as numerous as the Americans whom the Spaniards vanquished, and were, at the same time, quite as highly civilized as the victorious Spaniards. They had reared cities larger and fairer than Saragossa or Toledo, and buildings more beautiful and costly than the Cathedral of Seville. They could show bankers richer than the richest firms of Barcelona or Cadiz, viceroys whose splendor far surpassed that of Ferdinand the Catholic, myriads of cavalry and long trains of artillery which would have astonished the Great Captain. It might have been expected that every Englishman who takes any interest in any part of history would be curious to know how a handful of his countrymen, separated from their home by an immense ocean, subjugated, in the course of a few years, one of the greatest empires in the world. Yet, unless we greatly err, this subject is, to most readers, not only insipid, but positively distasteful.

Perhaps the fault lies partly with the historians. Mr. Mill's book, though it has undoubtedly great and rare merit, is not sufficiently animated and picturesque to attract those who read for amusement. Orme, inferior to no English historian in style and power of painting, is minute even to tediousness. In one vol-

ume he allots, on an average, a closely printed quarto page to the events of every forty-eight hours. The consequence is that his narrative, though one of the most authentic and one of the most finely written in our language, has never been very popular, and is now scarcely ever read.

We fear that the volumes before us will not much attract those readers whom Orme and Mill have repelled. The materials placed at the disposal of Sir John Malcolm by the late Lord Powis were indeed of great value. But we cannot say that they have been very skilfully worked up. It would, however, be unjust to criticise with severity a work which, if the author had lived to complete and revise it, would probably have been improved by condensation and by a better arrangement. We are more disposed to perform the pleasing duty of expressing our gratitude to the noble family to which the public owes so much useful and curious information.

The effect of the book, even when we make the largest allowance for the partiality of those who have furnished and of those who have digested the materials, is, on the whole, greatly to raise the character of Lord Clive. We are far, indeed, from sympathizing with Sir John Malcolm, whose love passes the love of biographers, and who can see nothing but wisdom and justice in the actions of his idol. But we are at least equally far from concurring in the severe judgment of Mr. Mill, who seems to us to show less discrimination in his account of Clive than in any other part of his valuable work. Clive, like most men who are born with strong passions and tried by strong temptations, committed great faults. But every person who takes

a fair and enlightened view of his whole career must admit that our island, so fertile in heroes and statesmen, has scarcely ever produced a man more truly great either in arms or in council.

The Clives had been settled, ever since the twelfth century, on an estate of no great value, near Market-Drayton, in Shropshire. In the reign of George the First, this moderate but ancient inheritance was possessed by Mr. Richard Clive, who seems to have been a plain man of no great tact or capacity. He had been bred to the law, and divided his time between professional business and the avocations of a small proprietor. He married a lady from Manchester, of the name of Gaskill, and became the father of a very numerous family. His eldest son, Robert, the founder of the British empire in India, was born at the old seat of his ancestors on the twenty-ninth of September, 1725.

Some lineaments of the character of the man were early discerned in the child. There remain letters written by his relations when he was in his seventh year ; and from these letters it appears that, even at that early age, his strong will and his fiery passions, sustained by a constitutional intrepidity which sometimes seemed hardly compatible with soundness of mind, had begun to cause great uneasiness to his family. "Fighting," says one of his uncles, "to which he is out of measure addicted, gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness that he flies out on every trifling occasion." The old people of the neighborhood still remember to have heard from their parents how Bob Clive climbed to the top of the lofty steeple of Market-Drayton, and with what terror the inhabitants saw him seated on a stone spout near the summit.

They also relate how he formed all the idle lads of the town into a kind of predatory army, and compelled the shopkeepers to submit to a tribute of apples and halfpence, in consideration of which he guaranteed the security of their windows. He was sent from school to school, making very little progress in his learning, and gaining for himself everywhere the character of an exceedingly naughty boy. One of his masters, it is said, was sagacious enough to prophesy that the idle lad would make a great figure in the world. But the general opinion seems to have been that poor Robert was a dunce, if not a reprobate. His family expected nothing good from such slender parts and such a headstrong temper. It is not strange, therefore, that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writership in the service of the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or to die of a fever at Madras.

Far different were the prospects of Clive from those of the youths whom the East India College now annually sends to the presidencies of our Asiatic empire. The Company was then purely a trading corporation. Its territory consisted of a few square miles, for which rent was paid to the native governments. Its troops were scarcely numerous enough to man the batteries of three or four ill-constructed forts which had been erected for the protection of the warehouses. The natives who composed a considerable part of these little garrisons had not yet been trained in the discipline of Europe, and were armed, some with swords and shields, some with bows and arrows. The business of the servant of the Company was not, as now, to conduct the judicial, financial, and diplomatic business of a great

country, but to take stock, to make advances to weavers, to ship cargoes, and, above all, to keep an eye on private traders who dared to infringe the monopoly. The younger clerks were so miserably paid that they could scarcely subsist without incurring debt ; the elder enriched themselves by trading on their own account ; and those who lived to rise to the top of the service often accumulated considerable fortunes.

Madras, to which Clive had been appointed, was at this time, perhaps, the first in importance of the Company's settlements. In the preceding century, Fort St. George had arisen on a barren spot beaten by a raging surf ; and in the neighborhood a town, inhabited by many thousands of natives, had sprung up, as towns spring up in the East, with the rapidity of the prophet's gourd. There were already in the suburbs many white villas, each surrounded by its garden, whither the wealthy agents of the Company retired, after the labors of the desk and the warehouse, to enjoy the cool breeze which springs up at sunset from the Bay of Bengal. The habits of these mercantile grandees appear to have been more profuse, luxurious, and ostentatious than those of high judicial and political functionaries who have succeeded them. But comfort was far less understood. Many devices which now mitigate the heat of the climate, preserve health, and prolong life were unknown. There was far less intercourse with Europe than at present. The voyage by the Cape, which in our time has often been performed within three months, was then very seldom accomplished in six, and was sometimes protracted to more than a year. Consequently, the Anglo-Indian was then much more estranged from his country, much more addicted to Oriental usages,

and much less fitted to mix in society after his return to Europe than the Anglo-Indian of the present day.

Within the fort and its precinct the English exercised, by permission of the native government, an extensive authority, such as every great Indian landowner exercised within his own domain. But they had never dreamed of claiming independent power. The surrounding country was ruled by the Nabob of the Carnatic, a deputy of the Viceroy of the Deccan, commonly called the Nizam, who was himself only a deputy of the mighty prince designated by our ancestors as the Great Mogul. Those names, once so august and formidable, still remain. There is still a Nabob of the Carnatic, who lives on a pension allowed to him by the English out of the revenues of the province which his ancestors ruled. There is still a Nizam, whose capital is overawed by a British cantonment, and to whom a British resident gives, under the name of advice, commands which are not to be disputed. There is still a Mogul, who is permitted to play at holding courts and receiving petitions, but who has less power to help or hurt than the youngest civil servant of the Company.

Clive's voyage was unusually tedious even for that age. The ship remained some months at the Brazils, where the young adventurer picked up some knowledge of Portuguese and spent all his pocket-money. He did not arrive in India till more than a year after he had left England. His situation at Madras was most painful. His funds were exhausted. His pay was small. He had contracted debts. He was wretchedly lodged, no small calamity in a climate which can be made tolerable to a European only by spacious and well-placed apartments. He had been furnished with letters of

recommendation to a gentleman who might have assisted him ; but when he landed at Fort St. George, he found that this gentleman had sailed for England. The lad's shy and haughty disposition withheld him from introducing himself to strangers. He was several months in India before he became acquainted with a single family. The climate affected his health and spirits. His duties were of a kind ill-suited to his ardent and daring character. He pined for his home, and in his letters to his relations expressed his feelings in language softer and more pensive than we should have expected either from the waywardness of his boyhood or from the inflexible sternness of his later years. "I have not enjoyed," says he, "one happy day since I left my native country ;" and again, "I must confess, at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner. . . . If I should be so far blessed as to revisit again my own country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented before me in one view."

One solace he found of the most respectable kind. The Governor possessed a good library, and permitted Clive to have access to it. The young man devoted much of his leisure to reading, and acquired at this time almost all the knowledge of books that he ever possessed. As a boy he had been too idle, as a man he soon became too busy, for literary pursuits.

But neither climate nor poverty, neither study nor the sorrows of a homesick exile, could tame the desperate audacity of his spirit. He behaved to his official superiors as he had behaved to his schoolmasters, and was several times in danger of losing his situation. Twice,

while residing in the Writers' Buildings, he attempted to destroy himself ; and twice the pistol which he snapped at his own head failed to go off. This circumstance, it is said, affected him as a similar escape affected Wallenstein. After satisfying himself that the pistol was really well loaded, he burst forth into an exclamation that surely he was reserved for something great.

About this time an event which at first seemed likely to destroy all his hopes in life suddenly opened before him a new path to eminence. Europe had been during some years distracted by the war of the Austrian succession. George the Second was the steady ally of Maria Theresa. The House of Bourbon took the opposite side. Though England was even then the first of maritime powers, she was not, as she has since become, more than a match on the sea for all the nations of the world together ; and she found it difficult to maintain a contest against the united navies of France and Spain. In the Eastern seas France obtained the ascendency. Labourdonnais, Governor of Mauritius, a man of eminent talents and virtues, conducted an expedition to the continent of India in spite of the opposition of the British fleet, landed, assembled an army, appeared before Madras, and compelled the town and fort to capitulate. The keys were delivered up ; the French colors were displayed on Fort St. George ; and the contents of the Company's warehouses were seized as prize of war by the conquerors. It was stipulated by the capitulation that the English inhabitants should be prisoners of war on parole, and that the town should remain in the hands of the French till it should be ransomed. Labourdonnais pledged his honor that only a moderate ransom should be required.

But the success of Labourdonnais had awakened the jealousy of his countryman Dupleix, Governor of Pondicherry. Dupleix, moreover, had already begun to revolve gigantic schemes, with which the restoration of Madras to the English was by no means compatible. He declared that Labourdonnais had gone beyond his powers ; that conquests made by the French arms on the continent of India were at the disposal of the Governor of Pondicherry alone ; and that Madras should be razed to the ground. Labourdonnais was compelled to yield. The anger which the breach of the capitulation excited among the English was increased by the ungenerous manner in which Dupleix treated the principal servants of the Company. The Governor and several of the first gentlemen of Fort St. George were carried under a guard to Pondicherry, and conducted through the town in a triumphal procession under the eyes of fifty thousand spectators. It was with reason thought that this gross violation of public faith absolved the inhabitants of Madras from the engagements into which they had entered with Labourdonnais. Clive fled from the town by night in the disguise of a Mussulman, and took refuge at Fort St. David, one of the small English settlements subordinate to Madras.

The circumstances in which he was now placed naturally led him to adopt a profession better suited to his restless and intrepid spirit than the business of examining packages and casting accounts. He solicited and obtained an ensign's commission in the service of the Company, and at twenty-one entered on his military career. His personal courage, of which he had, while still a writer, given signal proof by a desperate duel with a military bully who was the terror of Fort St.

David, speedily made him conspicuous even among hundreds of brave men. He soon began to show in his new calling other qualities which had not before been discerned in him—judgment, sagacity, deference to legitimate authority. He distinguished himself highly in several operations against the French, and was particularly noticed by Major Lawrence, who was then considered as the ablest British officer in India.

Clive had been only a few months in the army when intelligence arrived that peace had been concluded between Great Britain and France. Dupleix was in consequence compelled to restore Madras to the English Company ; and the young ensign was at liberty to resume his former business. He did, indeed, return for a short time to his desk. He again quitted it in order to assist Major Lawrence in some petty hostilities with the natives, and then again returned to it. While he was thus wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of India assumed a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French crowns ; but there arose between the English and French companies trading to the East a war most eventful and important —a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the House of Tamerlane.

The empire which Baber and his Moguls reared in the sixteenth century was long one of the most extensive and splendid in the world. In no European kingdom was so large a population subject to a single prince, or so large a revenue poured into the treasury. The beauty and magnificence of the buildings erected by the sovereigns of Hindostan amazed even travellers who had seen St. Peter's. The innumerable retinues

and gorgeous decorations which surrounded the throne of Delhi dazzled even eyes which were accustomed to the pomp of Versailles. Some of the great viceroys who held their posts by virtue of commissions from the Mogul ruled as many subjects as the King of France or the Emperor of Germany. Even the deputies of these deputies might well rank, as to extent of territory and amount of revenue, with the Grand Duke of Tuscany or the Elector of Saxony.

There can be little doubt that this great empire, powerful and prosperous as it appears on a superficial view, was yet, even in its best days, far worse governed than the worst-governed parts of Europe now are. The administration was tainted with all the vices of Oriental despotism, and with all the vices inseparable from the domination of race over race. The conflicting pretensions of the princes of the royal house produced a long series of crimes and public disasters. Ambitious lieutenants of the sovereign sometimes aspired to independence. Fierce tribes of Hindoos, impatient of a foreign yoke, frequently withheld tribute, repelled the armies of the government from the mountain fastnesses, and poured down in arms on the cultivated plains. In spite, however, of much constant maladministration, in spite of occasional convulsions which shook the whole frame of society, this great monarchy, on the whole, retained, during some generations, an outward appearance of unity, majesty, and energy. But throughout the long reign of Aurungzebe, the State, notwithstanding all that the vigor and policy of the prince could effect, was hastening to dissolution. After his death, which took place in the year 1707, the ruin was fearfully rapid. Violent shocks from without co-operated

with an incurable decay which was fast proceeding within ; and in a few years the empire had undergone utter decomposition.

The history of the successors of Theodosius bears no small analogy to that of the successors of Aurungzebe. But perhaps the fall of the Carlovingians furnishes the nearest parallel to the fall of the Moguls. Charlemagne was scarcely interred when the imbecility and the disputes of his descendants began to bring contempt on themselves and destruction on their subjects. The wide dominion of the Franks was severed into a thousand pieces. Nothing more than a nominal dignity was left to the abject heirs of an illustrious name, Charles the Bald and Charles the Fat and Charles the Simple. Fierce invaders, differing from each other in race, language, and religion, flocked, as if by concert, from the farthest corners of the earth to plunder provinces which the government could no longer defend. The pirates of the Northern Sea extended their ravages from the Elbe to the Pyrenees, and at length fixed their seat in the rich valley of the Seine. The Hungarian in whom the trembling monks fancied that they recognized the Gog or Magog of prophecy carried back the plunder of the cities of Lombardy to the depth of the Pannonian forests. The Saracen ruled in Sicily, desolated the fertile plains of Campania, and spread terror even to the walls of Rome. In the midst of these sufferings, a great internal change passed upon the empire. The corruption of death began to ferment into new forms of life. While the great body, as a whole, was torpid and passive, every separate member began to feel with a sense and to move with an energy all its own. Just here, in the most barren and dreary

tract of European history, all feudal privileges, all modern nobility, take their source. It is to this point that we trace the power of those princes who, nominally vassals, but really independent, long governed, with the titles of dukes, marquesses, and counts, almost every part of the dominions which had obeyed Charlemagne.

Such, or nearly such, was the change which passed on the Mogul Empire during the forty years which followed the death of Aurungzebe. A succession of nominal sovereigns, sunk in indolence and debauchery, sauntered away life in secluded palaces, chewing bang, fondling concubines, and listening to buffoons. A succession of ferocious invaders descended through the western passes to prey on the defenceless wealth of Hindostan. A Persian conqueror crossed the Indus, marched through the gates of Delhi, and bore away in triumph those treasures of which the magnificence had astounded Roe and Bernier—the Peacock Throne, on which the richest jewels of Golconda had been disposed by the most skilful hands of Europe, and the inestimable Mountain of Light, which, after many strange vicissitudes, lately shone in the bracelet of Runjeet Singh, and is now destined to adorn the hideous idol of Orissa. The Afghan soon followed to complete the work of devastation which the Persian had begun. The warlike tribes of Rajpootana threw off the Mussulman yoke. A band of mercenary soldiers occupied Rohilcund. The Seiks ruled on the Indus. The Jauts spread dismay along the Jumna. The highlands which border on the western sea-coast of India poured forth a yet more formidable race—a race which was long the terror of every native power, and which,

after many desperate and doubtful struggles, yielded only to the fortune and genius of England. It was under the reign of Aurungzebe that this wild clan of plunderers first descended from their mountains; and soon after his death every corner of his wide empire learned to tremble at the mighty name of the Mahrattas. Many fertile viceroyalties were entirely subdued by them. Their dominions stretched across the peninsula from sea to sea. Mahratta captains reigned at Poonah, at Gualior, in Guzerat, in Berar, and in Tanjore. Nor did they, though they had become great sovereigns, therefore cease to be freebooters. They still retained the predatory habits of their forefathers. Every region which was not subject to their rule was wasted by their incursions. Wherever their kettle-drums were heard, the peasant threw his bag of rice on his shoulder, hid his small savings in his girdle, and fled with his wife and children to the mountains or the jungles, to the milder neighborhood of the hyæna and the tiger. Many provinces redeemed their harvests by the payment of an annual ransom. Even the wretched phantom who still bore the imperial title stooped to pay this ignominious blackmail. The camp-fires of one rapacious leader were seen from the walls of the palace of Delhi. Another, at the head of his innumerable cavalry, descended year after year on the rice-fields of Bengal. Even the European factors trembled for their magazines. Less than a hundred years ago, it was thought necessary to fortify Calcutta against the horsemen of Berar; and the name of the Mahratta ditch still preserves the memory of the danger.

Wherever the viceroys of the Mogul retained authority they became sovereigns. They might still

acknowledge in words the superiority of the House of Tamerlane ; as a Count of Flanders or a Duke of Burgundy might have acknowledged the superiority of the most helpless driveller among the later Carlovingians. They might occasionally send to their titular sovereign a complimentary present, or solicit from him a title of honor. In truth, however, they were no longer lieutenants removable at pleasure, but independent hereditary princes. In this way originated those great Mussulman houses which formerly ruled Bengal and the Carnatic, and those which still, though in a state of vassalage, exercise some of the powers of royalty at Lucknow and Hyderabad.

In what was this confusion to end ? Was the strife to continue during centuries ? Was it to terminate in the rise of another great monarchy ? Was the Mussulman or the Mahratta to be the Lord of India ? Was another Baber to descend from the mountains, and to lead the hardy tribes of Cabul and Khorassan against a wealthier and less warlike race ? None of these events seemed improbable. But scarcely any man, however sagacious, would have thought it possible that a trading company separated from India by fifteen thousand miles of sea, and possessing in India only a few acres for purposes of commerce, would, in less than a hundred years, spread its empire from Cape Comorin to the eternal snow of the Himalayas ; would compel Mahratta and Mahometan to forget their mutual feuds in common subjection ; would tame down even those wild races which had resisted the most powerful of the Moguls ; and, having united under its laws a hundred millions of subjects, would carry its victorious arms far to the east of the Burrampooter and far to the west of

the Hydaspes, dictate terms of peace at the gates of Ava, and seat its vassal on the throne of Candahar.

The man who first saw that it was possible to found a European empire on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy was Dupleix. His restless, capacious, and inventive mind had formed this scheme at a time when the ablest servants of the English Company were busied only about invoices and bills of lading. Nor had he only proposed to himself the end. He had also a just and distinct view of the means by which it was to be attained. He clearly saw that the greatest force which the princes of India could bring into the field would be no match for a small body of men trained in the discipline and guided by the tactics of the West. He saw, also, that the natives of India might, under European commanders, be formed into armies such as Saxe or Frederic would be proud to command. He was perfectly aware that the most easy and convenient way in which a European adventurer could exercise sovereignty in India was to govern the motions, and to speak through the mouth, of some glittering puppet dignified by the title of Nabob or Nizam. The arts both of war and policy, which a few years later were employed with such signal success by the English, were first understood and practised by this ingenious and aspiring Frenchman.

The situation of India was such that scarcely any aggression could be without a pretext, either in old laws or in recent practice. All rights were in a state of utter uncertainty ; and the Europeans who took part in the disputes of the natives confounded the confusion by applying to Asiatic politics the public law of the West and analogies drawn from the feudal system. If

it was convenient to treat a Nabob as an independent prince, there was an excellent plea for doing so. He was independent in fact. If it was convenient to treat him as a mere deputy of the Court of Delhi, there was no difficulty ; for he was so in theory. If it was convenient to consider his office as an hereditary dignity, or as a dignity held during life only, or as a dignity held only during the good pleasure of the Mogul, arguments and precedents might be found for every one of those views. The party who had the heir of Baber in their hands represented him as the undoubted, the legitimate, the absolute sovereign, whom all subordinate authorities were bound to obey. The party against whom his name was used did not want plausible pretexts for maintaining that the empire was in fact dissolved, and that, though it might be decent to treat the Mogul with respect, as a venerable relic of an order of things which had passed away, it was absurd to regard him as the real master of Hindostan.

In the year 1748 died one of the most powerful of the new masters of India, the great Nizam al Mulk, Viceroy of the Deccan. His authority descended to his son, Nazir Jung. Of the provinces subject to this high functionary, the Carnatic was the wealthiest and the most extensive. It was governed by an ancient Nabob whose name the English corrupted into Anaverdy Khan.

But there were pretenders to the government both of the viceroyalty and of the subordinate province. Mirzapha Jung, a grandson of Nizam al Mulk, appeared as the competitor of Nazir Jung. Chunda Sahib, son-in-law of a former Nabob of the Carnatic, disputed the title of Anaverdy Khan. In the unsettled

state of Indian law, it was easy for both Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib to make out something like a claim of right. In a society altogether disorganized, they had no difficulty in finding greedy adventurers to follow their standards. They united their interests, invaded the Carnatic, and applied for assistance to the French, whose fame had been raised by their success against the English in the recent war on the coast of Coromandel.

Nothing could have happened more pleasing to the subtle and ambitious Dupleix. To make a Nabob of the Carnatic, to make a Viceroy of the Deccan, to rule under their names the whole of Southern India—this was, indeed, an attractive prospect. He allied himself with the pretenders, and sent four hundred French soldiers, and two thousand Sepoys disciplined after the European fashion, to the assistance of his confederates. A battle was fought. The French distinguished themselves greatly. Anaverdy Khan was defeated and slain. His son, Mahomet Ali, who was afterwards well known in England as the Nabob of Arcot, and who owes to the eloquence of Burke a most unenviable immortality, fled with a scanty remnant of his army to Trichinopoly; and the conquerors became at once masters of almost every part of the Carnatic.

This was but the beginning of the greatness of Dupleix. After some months of fighting, negotiation, and intrigue, his ability and good-fortune seemed to have prevailed everywhere. Nazir Jung perished by the hands of his own followers ; Mirzapha Jung was master of the Deccan ; and the triumph of French arms and French policy was complete. At Pondicherry all was exultation and festivity. Salutes were fired from

the batteries, and Te Deum sung in the churches. The new Nizam came thither to visit his allies ; and the ceremony of his installation was performed there with great pomp. Dupleix, dressed in the garb worn by Mahometans of the highest rank, entered the town in the same palanquin with the Nizam, and, in the pageant which followed, took precedence of all the court. He was declared Governor of India from the River Krishna to Cape Comorin, a country about as large as France, with authority superior even to that of Chunda Sahib. He was intrusted with the command of seven thousand cavalry. It was announced that no mint would be suffered to exist in the Carnatic except that at Pondicherry. A large portion of the treasures which former viceroys of the Deccan had accumulated found its way into the coffers of the French governor. It was rumored that he had received two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, besides many valuable jewels. In fact, there could scarcely be any limit to his gains. He now ruled thirty millions of people with almost absolute power. No honor or emolument could be obtained from the government but by his intervention. No petition, unless signed by him, was perused by the Nizam.

Mirzapha Jung survived his elevation only a few months. But another prince of the same house was raised to the throne by French influence, and ratified all the promises of his predecessor. Dubliex was now the greatest potentate in India. His countrymen boasted that his name was mentioned with awe even in the chambers of the palace of Delhi. The native population looked with amazement on the progress which, in the short space of four years, a European adventurer

had made towards dominion in Asia. Nor was the vainglorious Frenchman content with the reality of power. He loved to display his greatness with arrogant ostentation before the eyes of his subjects and of his rivals. Near the spot where his policy had obtained its chief triumph—by the fall of Nazir Jung and the elevation of Mirzapha—he determined to erect a column, on the four sides of which four pompous inscriptions, in four languages, should proclaim his glory to all the nations of the East. Medals stamped with emblems of his successes were buried beneath the foundations of this stately pillar, and round it arose a town bearing the haughty name of Dupleix Fatihabad, which is, being interpreted, the City of the Victory of Dupleix.

The English had made some feeble and irresolute attempts to stop the rapid and brilliant career of the rival Company, and continued to recognize Mahomet Ali as Nabob of the Carnatic. But the dominions of Mahomet Ali consisted of Trichinopoly alone ; and Trichinopoly was now invested by Chunda Sahib and his French auxiliaries. To raise the siege seemed impossible. The small force which was then at Madras had no commander. Major Lawrence had returned to England ; and not a single officer of established character remained in the settlement. The natives had learned to look with contempt on the mighty nation which was soon to conquer and to rule them. They had seen the French colors flying on Fort St. George ; they had seen the chiefs of the English factory led in triumph through the streets of Pondicherry ; they had seen the arms and counsels of Dupleix everywhere successful, while the opposition which the authorities of

Madras had made to his progress had served only to expose their own weakness and to heighten his glory. At this moment the valor and genius of an obscure English youth suddenly turned the tide of fortune.

Clive was now twenty-five years old. After hesitating for some time between a military and a commercial life, he had at length been placed in a post which partook of both characters—that of commissary to the troops with the rank of captain. The present emergency called forth all his powers. He represented to his superiors that, unless some vigorous effort were made, Trichinopoly would fall, the House of Anaverdy Khan would perish, and the French would become the real masters of the whole peninsula of India. It was absolutely necessary to strike some daring blow. If an attack were made on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic and the favorite residence of the Nabobs, it was not impossible that the siege of Trichinopoly would be raised. The heads of the English settlement, now thoroughly alarmed by the success of Dupleix, and apprehensive that, in the event of a new war between France and Great Britain, Madras would be instantly taken and destroyed, approved of Clive's plan, and intrusted the execution of it to himself. The young captain was put at the head of two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred Sepoys armed and disciplined after the European fashion. Of the eight officers who commanded this little force under him, only two had ever been in action, and four of the eight were factors of the Company, whom Clive's example had induced to offer their services. The weather was stormy ; but Clive pushed on, through thunder, lightning, and rain, to the gates of Arcot. The garrison,

in a panic, evacuated the fort, and the English entered it without a blow.

But Clive well knew that he should not be suffered to retain undisturbed possession of his conquest. He instantly began to collect provisions, to throw up works, and to make preparations for sustaining a siege. The garrison, which had fled at his approach, had now recovered from its dismay, and, having been swollen by large reinforcements from the neighborhood to a force of three thousand men, encamped close to the town. At dead of night, Clive marched out of the fort, attacked the camp by surprise, slew great numbers, dispersed the rest, and returned to his quarters without having lost a single man.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached four thousand men from his camp and sent them to Arcot. They were speedily joined by the remains of the force which Clive had lately scattered. They were further strengthened by two thousand men from Vellore, and by a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers whom Dupleix had despatched from Pondicherry. The whole of this army, amounting to about ten thousand men, was under the command of Rajah Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib.

Rajah Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The walls were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans and two hundred Se-

poys. Only four officers were left ; the stock of provisions was scanty ; and the commander, who had to conduct the defence under circumstances so discouraging, was a young man of five-and-twenty, who had been bred a book-keeper.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence with a firmness, vigilance, and ability which would have done honor to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination ; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, color, language, manners, and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed anything that is related of the Tenth Legion of Cæsar or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. The Sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity or of the influence of a commanding mind.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed. But there was hope from another quarter. A body of six thousand Mahrattas, half soldiers, half robbers, under the command of a chief named Morari Row, had been hired to assist Mahomet Ali ; but, thinking the French power irresistible,

and the triumph of Chunda Sahib certain, they had hitherto remained inactive on the frontiers of the Carnatic. The fame of the defence of Arcot roused them from their torpor. Morari Row declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves. Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion. It was necessary for him to be expeditious. He first tried negotiation. He offered large bribes to Clive, which were rejected with scorn. He vowed that if his proposals were not accepted, he would instantly storm the fort, and put every man in it to the sword. Clive told him in reply, with characteristic haughtiness, that his father was a usurper, that his army was a rabble, and that he would do well to think twice before he sent such poltroons into a breach defended by English soldiers.

Rajah Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise. It was the great Mahometan festival which is sacred to the memory of Hosein, the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching than the event which gave rise to that solemnity. The mournful legend relates how the chief of the Fatimites, when all his brave followers had perished round him, drank his latest draught of water and uttered his latest prayer; how the assassins carried his head in triumph; how the tyrant smote the lifeless lips with his staff; and how a few old men recollected with tears that they had seen those lips pressed to the lips of the Prophet of God. After the lapse of near twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest

emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslems of India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation that some, it is said, have given up the ghost from the mere effect of mental excitement. They believe that whoever, during this festival, falls in arms against the infidels atones by his death for all the sins of his life, and passes at once to the garden of the Houris. It was at this time that Rajah Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal; and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bang, rushed furiously to the attack.

Clive had received secret intelligence of the design, had made his arrangements, and, exhausted by fatigue, had thrown himself on his bed. He was awakened by the alarm, and was instantly at his post. The enemy advanced, driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round, and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude which had urged them forward. A raft was launched on the water which filled one part of the ditch. Clive, perceiving that his gunners at that post did not understand their business, took the management of a piece of artillery himself, and cleared the raft in a few minutes. Where the moat was dry, the assailants mounted with great boldness; but they were received with a fire so heavy and so well-directed that it soon quelled the courage even of fanaticism and of intoxication. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every

shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired behind the ditch.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when day broke the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving to the English several guns and a large quantity of ammunition.

The news was received at Fort St. George with transports of joy and pride. Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command. Two hundred English soldiers and seven hundred Sepoys were sent to him, and with this force he instantly commenced offensive operations. He took the fort of Timery, effected a junction with a division of Morari Row's army, and hastened by forced marches to attack Rajah Sahib, who was at the head of about five thousand men, of whom three hundred were French. The action was sharp; but Clive gained a complete victory. The military chest of Rajah Sahib fell into the hands of the conquerors. Six hundred Sepoys who had served in the enemy's army came over to Clive's quarters, and were taken into the British service. Conjeveram surrendered without a blow. The Governor of Arnee deserted Chunda Sahib, and recognized the title of Mahomet Ali.

Had the entire direction of the war been intrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appeared in all the movements of the English, except where he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they found elsewhere.

The effect of this languor was that in no long time Rajah Sahib, at the head of a considerable army, in which were four hundred French troops, appeared almost under the guns of Fort St. George and laid waste the villas and gardens of the gentlemen of the English settlement. But he was again encountered and defeated by Clive. More than a hundred of the French were killed or taken—a loss more serious than that of thousands of natives. The victorious army marched from the field of battle to Fort St. David. On the road lay the City of the Victory of Dupleix, and the stately monument which was designed to commemorate the triumphs of France in the East. Clive ordered both the city and the monument to be razed to the ground. He was induced, we believe, to take this step, not by personal or national malevolence, but by a just and profound policy. The town and its pompous name, the pillar and its vaunting inscriptions, were among the devices by which Dupleix had laid the public mind of India under a spell. This spell it was Clive's business to break. The natives had been taught that France was confessedly the first power in Europe, and that the English did not presume to dispute her supremacy. No measure could be more effectual for the removing of this delusion than the public and solemn demolition of the French trophies.

The government of Madras, encouraged by these events, determined to send a strong detachment, under Clive, to reinforce the garrison of Trichinopoly. But just at this conjuncture Major Lawrence arrived from England and assumed the chief command. From the waywardness and impatience of control which had characterized Clive, both at school and in the counting-

house, it might have been expected that he would not, after such achievements, act with zeal and good-humor in a subordinate capacity. But Lawrence had early treated him with kindness; and it is bare justice to Clive to say that, proud and overbearing as he was, kindness was never thrown away upon him. He cheerfully placed himself under the orders of his old friend, and exerted himself as strenuously in the second post as he could have done in the first. Lawrence well knew the value of such assistance. Though himself gifted with no intellectual faculty higher than plain good sense, he fully appreciated the powers of his brilliant coadjutor. Though he had made a methodical study of military tactics, and, like all men regularly bred to a profession, was disposed to look with disdain on interlopers, he had yet liberality enough to acknowledge that Clive was an exception to common rules. "Some people," he wrote, "are pleased to term Captain Clive fortunate and lucky; but, in my opinion, from the knowledge I have of the gentleman, he deserved and might expect from his conduct everything as it fell out—a man of an undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and of a presence of mind which never left him in the greatest danger; born a soldier; for, without a military education of any sort, or much conversing with any of the profession, from his judgment and good sense, he led on an army, like an experienced officer and a brave soldier, with a prudence that certainly warranted success."

The French had no commander to oppose to the two friends. Dupleix, not inferior in talents for negotiation and intrigue to any European who has borne a part in the revolutions of India, was ill qualified to

direct in person military operations. He had not been bred a soldier, and had no inclination to become one. His enemies accused him of personal cowardice, and he defended himself in a strain worthy of Captain Bobadil. He kept away from shot, he said, because silence and tranquillity were propitious to his genius, and he found it difficult to pursue his meditations amidst the noise of fire-arms. He was thus under the necessity of intrusting to others the execution of his great warlike designs, and he bitterly complained that he was ill served. He had, indeed, been assisted by one officer of eminent merit, the celebrated Bussy. But Bussy had marched northwards with the Nizam, and was fully employed in looking after his own interests and those of France at the court of that prince. Among the officers who remained with Dupleix there was not a single man of capacity; and many of them were boys, at whose ignorance and folly the common soldiers laughed.

The English triumphed everywhere. The besiegers of Trichinopoly were themselves besieged and compelled to capitulate. Chunda Sahib fell into the hands of the Mahrattas and was put to death, at the instigation, probably, of his competitor, Mahomet Ali. The spirit of Dupleix, however, was unconquerable, and his resources inexhaustible. From his employers in Europe he no longer received help or countenance. They condemned his policy; they gave him no pecuniary assistance; they sent him for troops only the sweepings of the galleys. Yet still he persisted—intrigued, bribed, promised, lavished his private fortune, strained his credit, procured new diplomas from Delhi, raised up new enemies to the government of Madras on

every side, and found tools even among the allies of the English Company. But all was in vain. Slowly but steadily the power of Britain continued to increase, and that of France to decline.

The health of Clive had never been good during his residence in India, and his constitution was now so much impaired that he determined to return to England. Before his departure he undertook a service of considerable difficulty, and performed it with his usual vigor and dexterity. The forts of Covelong and Chingleput were occupied by French garrisons. It was determined to send a force against them. But the only force available for this purpose was of such a description that no officer but Clive would risk his reputation by commanding it. It consisted of five hundred newly levied Sepoys and two hundred recruits who had just landed from England, and who were the worst and lowest wretches that the Company's crimps could pick up in the flash-houses of London. Clive, ill and exhausted as he was, undertook to make an army of this undisciplined rabble, and marched with them to Covelong. A shot from the fort killed one of these extraordinary soldiers ; on which all the rest faced about and ran away, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Clive rallied them. On another occasion the noise of a gun terrified the sentinels so much that one of them was found, some hours later, at the bottom of a well. Clive gradually accustomed them to danger, and, by exposing himself constantly in the most perilous situations, shamed them into courage. He at length succeeded in forming a respectable force out of his unpromising materials. Covelong fell. Clive learned that a strong detachment was marching to relieve it

from Chingleput. He took measures to prevent the enemy from learning that they were too late, laid an ambuscade for them on the road, killed a hundred of them with one fire, took three hundred prisoners, pursued the fugitives to the gates of Chingleput, laid siege instantly to that fastness (reputed one of the strongest in India), made a breach, and was on the point of storming when the French commandant capitulated and retired with his men.

Clive returned to Madras victorious, but in a state of health which rendered it impossible for him to remain there long. He married at this time a young lady of the name of Maskelyne, sister of the eminent mathematician who long held the post of Astronomer Royal. She is described as handsome and accomplished ; and her husband's letters, it is said, contain proofs that he was devotedly attached to her.

Almost immediately after the marriage, Clive embarked with his bride for England. He returned a very different person from the poor slighted boy who had been sent out ten years before to seek his fortune. He was only twenty-seven ; yet his country already respected him as one of her first soldiers. There was then general peace in Europe. The Carnatic was the only part of the world where the English and French were in arms against each other. The vast schemes of Dupleix had excited no small uneasiness in the city of London ; and the rapid turn of fortune, which was chiefly owing to the courage and talents of Clive, had been hailed with delight. The young captain was known at the India House by the honorable nickname of General Clive, and was toasted by that appellation at the feasts of the Directors. On his arrival in Eng-

land he found himself an object of general interest and admiration. The East India Company thanked him for his services in the warmest terms, and bestowed on him a sword set with diamonds. With rare delicacy, he refused to receive this token of gratitude unless a similar compliment were paid to his friend and commander, Lawrence.

It may easily be supposed that Clive was most cordially welcomed home by his family, who were delighted by his success, though they seem to have been hardly able to comprehend how their naughty, idle Bobby had become so great a man. His father had been singularly hard of belief. Not until the news of the defence of Arcot arrived in England was the old gentleman heard to growl out that, after all, the booby had something in him. His expressions of approbation became stronger and stronger as news arrived of one brilliant exploit after another, and he was at length immoderately fond and proud of his son.

Clive's relations had very substantial reasons for rejoicing at his return. Considerable sums of prize-money had fallen to his share; and he had brought home a moderate fortune, part of which he expended in extricating his father from pecuniary difficulties and in redeeming the family estate. The remainder he appears to have dissipated in the course of about two years. He lived splendidly, dressed gayly even for those times, kept a carriage and saddle-horses, and, not content with these ways of getting rid of his money, resorted to the most speedy and effectual of all modes of evacuation—a contested election followed by a petition.

At the time of the general election of 1754 the gov-

ernment was in a very singular state. There was scarcely any formal opposition. The Jacobites had been cowed by the issue of the last rebellion. The Tory party had fallen into utter contempt. It had been deserted by all the men of talents who had belonged to it, and had scarcely given a symptom of life during some years. The small faction which had been held together by the influence and promises of Prince Frederic had been dispersed by his death. Almost every public man of distinguished talents in the kingdom, whatever his early connections might have been, was in office, and called himself a Whig. But this extraordinary appearance of concord was quite delusive. The administration itself was distracted by bitter enmities and conflicting pretensions. The chief object of its members was to depress and supplant each other. The Prime-minister (Newcastle), weak, timid, jealous, and perfidious, was at once detested and despised by some of the most important members of his government, and by none more than by Henry Fox, the Secretary at War. This able, daring, and ambitious man seized every opportunity of crossing the First Lord of the Treasury, from whom he well knew that he had little to dread and little to hope ; for Newcastle was through life equally afraid of breaking with men of parts and of promoting them.

Newcastle had set his heart on returning two members for St. Michael, one of those wretched Cornish boroughs which were swept away by the Reform Act in 1832. He was opposed by Lord Sandwich, whose influence had long been paramount there ; and Fox exerted himself strenuously in Sandwich's behalf. Clive, who had been introduced to Fox, and very

kindly received by him, was brought forward on the Sandwich interest, and was returned. But a petition was presented against the return, and was backed by the whole influence of the Duke of Newcastle.

The case was heard, according to the usage of that time, before a committee of the whole House. Questions respecting elections were then considered merely as party questions. Judicial impartiality was not even affected. Sir Robert Walpole was in the habit of saying openly that in election battles there ought to be no quarter. On the present occasion the excitement was great. The matter really at issue was not whether Clive had been properly or improperly returned, but whether Newcastle or Fox was to be master of the new House of Commons, and, consequently, First Minister. The contest was long and obstinate, and success seemed to lean sometimes to one side and sometimes to the other. Fox put forth all his rare powers of debate, beat half the lawyers in the House at their own weapons, and carried division after division against the whole influence of the Treasury. The committee decided in Clive's favor. But when the resolution was reported to the House, things took a different course. The remnant of the Tory Opposition, contemptible as it was, had yet sufficient weight to turn the scale between the nicely balanced parties of Newcastle and Fox. Newcastle the Tories could only despise. Fox they hated as the boldest and most subtle politician and the ablest debater among the Whigs, as the steady friend of Walpole, as the devoted adherent of the Duke of Cumberland. After wavering till the last moment, they determined to vote in a body with the Prime-minister's friends. The consequence was that the House, by a

small majority, rescinded the decision of the committee, and Clive was unseated.

Ejected from Parliament and straitened in his means, he naturally began to look again towards India. The Company and the government were eager to avail themselves of his services. A treaty favorable to England had, indeed, been concluded in the Carnatic. Dupleix had been superseded, and had returned with the wreck of his immense fortune to Europe, where calumny and chicanery soon hunted him to his grave. But many signs indicated that a war between France and Great Britain was at hand ; and it was therefore thought desirable to send an able commander to the Company's settlements in India. The Directors appointed Clive Governor of Fort St. David. The King gave him the commission of a lieutenant-colonel in the British army, and in 1755 he again sailed for Asia.

The first service on which he was employed after his return to the East was the reduction of the stronghold of Gheriah. This fortress, built on a craggy promontory, and almost surrounded by the ocean, was the den of a pirate named Angria, whose barks had long been the terror of the Arabian Gulf. Admiral Watson, who commanded the English squadron in the Eastern seas, burned Angria's fleet, while Clive attacked the fastness by land. The place soon fell, and a booty of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling was divided among the conquerors.

After this exploit, Clive proceeded to his government of Fort St. David. Before he had been there two months, he received intelligence which called forth all the energy of his bold and active mind.

Of the provinces which had been subject to the House

of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal. No part of India possessed such natural advantages, both for agriculture and for commerce. The Ganges, rushing through a hundred channels to the sea, has formed a vast plain of rich mould which, even under the tropical sky, rivals the verdure of an English April. The rice-fields yield an increase such as is elsewhere unknown. Spices, sugar, vegetable oils, are produced with marvellous exuberance. The rivers afford an inexhaustible supply of fish. The desolate islands along the sea-coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers, supply the cultivated districts with abundance of salt. The great stream which fertilizes the soil is, at the same time, the chief highway of Eastern commerce. On its banks, and on those of its tributary waters, are the wealthiest marts, the most splendid capitals, and the most sacred shrines of India. The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature. In spite of the Mussulman despot and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the Garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly. Distant provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries ; and the noble ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms. The race by whom this rich tract was peopled, enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful employments, bore the same relation to other Asiatics which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe. The Castilians have a proverb that in Valencia the earth is water and the men women ; and the description is at least equally applicable to the vast plain of the Lower

Ganges. Whatever the Bengalee does, he does languidly. His favorite pursuits are sedentary. He shrinks from bodily exertion ; and, though voluble in dispute and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in a personal conflict, and scarcely ever enlists as a soldier. We doubt whether there be a hundred genuine Bengalees in the whole army of the East India Company. There never, perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature and by habit for a foreign yoke.

The great commercial companies of Europe had long possessed factories in Bengal. The French were settled, as they still are, at Chandernagore on the Hoogly. Higher up the stream the Dutch traders held Chinsurah. Nearer to the sea the English had built Fort William. A church and ample warehouses rose in the vicinity. A row of spacious houses, belonging to the chief factors of the East India Company, lined the banks of the river ; and in the neighborhood had sprung up a large and busy native town, where some Hindoo merchants of great opulence had fixed their abode. But the tract now covered by the palaces of Chowringhee contained only a few miserable huts thatched with straw. A jungle, abandoned to waterfowl and alligators, covered the site of the present Citadel, and the Course, which is now daily crowded at sunset with the gayest equipages of Calcutta. For the ground on which the settlement stood, the English, like other great landholders, paid rent to the government ; and they were, like other great landholders, permitted to exercise a certain jurisdiction within their domain.

The great province of Bengal, together with Orissa

and Bahar, had long been governed by a viceroy, whom the English called Aliverdy Khan, and who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, had become virtually independent. He died in 1756, and the sovereignty descended to his grandson, a youth under twenty years of age, who bore the name of Surajah Dowlah. Oriental despots are perhaps the worst class of human beings ; and this unhappy boy was one of the worst specimens of his class. His understanding was naturally feeble, and his temper naturally unamiable. His education had been such as would have enervated even a vigorous intellect and perverted even a generous disposition. He was unreasonable, because nobody ever dared to reason with him ; and selfish, because he had never been made to feel himself dependent on the good-will of others. Early debauchery had unnerved his body and his mind. He indulged immoderately in the use of ardent spirits, which inflamed his weak brain almost to madness. His chosen companions were flatterers, sprung from the dregs of the people, and recommended by nothing but buffoonery and servility. It is said that he had arrived at that last stage of human depravity when cruelty becomes pleasing for its own sake ; when the sight of pain, as pain, where no advantage is to be gained, no offence punished, no danger averted, is an agreeable excitement. It had been early his amusement to torture beasts and birds ; and when he grew up, he enjoyed with still keener relish the misery of his fellow-creatures.

From a child Surajah Dowlah had hated the English. It was his whim to do so ; and his whims were never opposed. He had also formed a very exaggerated

notion of the wealth which might be obtained by plundering them; and his feeble and uncultivated mind was incapable of perceiving that the riches of Calcutta, had they been even greater than he imagined, would not compensate him for what he must lose of the European trade, of which Bengal was a chief seat, should be driven by his violence to some other quarter. Pretexts for a quarrel were readily found. The English, in expectation of a war with France, had begun to fortify their settlement without special permission from the Nabob. A rich native, whom he longed to plunder, had taken refuge at Calcutta, and had not been delivered up. On such grounds as these, Surajah Dowlah marched with a great army against Fort William.

The servants of the Company at Madras had been forced by Dupleix to become statesmen and soldiers. Those in Bengal were still mere traders, and were terrified and bewildered by the approaching danger. The Governor, who had heard much of Surajah Dowlah's cruelty, was frightened out of his wits, jumped into a boat and took refuge in the nearest ship. The military commandant thought that he could not do better than follow so good an example. The fort was taken after a feeble resistance; and great numbers of the English fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Nabob seated himself with regal pomp in the principal hall of the factory, and ordered Mr. Holwell, the first in rank among the prisoners, to be brought before him. His Highness talked about the insolence of the English, and grumbled at the smallness of the treasure which he had found; but promised to spare their lives and retired to rest.

Then was committed that great crime, memorable for its singular atrocity, memorable for the tremendous retribution by which it was followed. The English captives were left at the mercy of the guards, and the guards determined to secure them for the night in the prison of the garrison, a chamber known by the fearful name of the Black Hole. Even for a single European malefactor that dungeon would, in such a climate, have been too close and narrow. The space was only twenty feet square. The air-holes were small and obstructed. It was the summer solstice, the season when the fierce heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to natives of England by lofty halls and by the constant waving of fans. The number of the prisoners was one hundred and forty-six. When they were ordered to enter the cell, they imagined that the soldiers were joking; and, being in high spirits on account of the promise of the Nabob to spare their lives, they laughed and jested at the absurdity of the notion. They soon discovered their mistake. They expostulated; they entreated; but in vain. The guards threatened to cut down all who hesitated. The captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword, and the door was instantly shut and locked upon them.

Nothing in history or fiction, not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, after he had wiped his bloody lips on the scalp of his murderer, approaches the horrors which were recounted by the few survivors of that night. They cried for mercy. They strove to burst the door. Holwell, who, even in that extremity, retained some presence of mind, offered large bribes to the jailers. But the answer was that nothing could be done without the Nabob's orders, that

the Nabob was asleep, and that he would be angry if anybody woke him. Then the prisoners went mad with despair. They trampled each other down, fought for the places at the windows, fought for the pittance of water with which the cruel mercy of the muderers mocked their agonies, raved, prayed, blasphemed, implored the guards to fire among them. The jailers in the meantime held lights to the bars, and shouted with laughter at the frantic struggles of their victims. At length the tumult died away in low gaspings and moanings. The day broke. The Nabob had slept off his debauch, and permitted the door to be opened. But it was sometime before the soldiers could make a lane for the survivors, by piling up on each side the heaps of corpses on which the burning climate had already begun to do its loathsome work. When at length a passage was made, twenty-three ghastly figures, such as their own mothers would not have known, staggered one by one out of the charnel-house. A pit was instantly dug. The dead bodies, a hundred and twenty-three in number, were flung into it promiscuously, and covered up.

But these things, which, after the lapse of more than eighty years, cannot be told or read without horror, awakened neither remorse nor pity in the bosom of the savage Nabob. He inflicted no punishment on the murderers. He showed no tenderness to the survivors. Some of them, indeed, from whom nothing was to be got were suffered to depart ; but those from whom it was thought that anything could be extorted were treated with execrable cruelty. Holwell, unable to walk, was carried before the tyrant, who reproached him, threatened him, and sent him up the country in

irons, together with some other gentlemen who were suspected of knowing more than they chose to tell about the treasures of the Company. These persons, still bowed down by the sufferings of that great agony, were lodged in miserable sheds and fed only with grain and water, till at length the intercessions of the female relations of the Nabob procured their release. One English-woman had survived that night. She was placed in the harem of the Prince at Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah, in the meantime, sent letters to his nominal sovereign at Delhi, describing the late conquest in the most pompous language. He placed a garrison in Fort William, forbade Englishmen to dwell in the neighborhood, and directed that, in memory of his great actions, Calcutta should thenceforward be called Alinagore ; that is to say, the Port of God.

In August the news of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras, and excited the fiercest and bitterest resentment. The cry of the whole settlement was for vengeance. Within forty-eight hours after the arrival of the intelligence it was determined that an expedition should be sent to the Hoogly, and that Clive should be at the head of the land forces. The naval armament was under the command of Admiral Watson. Nine hundred English infantry, fine troops and full of spirit, and fifteen hundred Sepoys, composed the army which sailed to punish a prince who had more subjects than Louis the Fifteenth or the Empress Maria Theresa. In October the expedition sailed ; but it had to make its way against adverse winds, and did not reach Bengal till December.

The Nabob was revelling in fancied security at Moorshedabad. He was so profoundly ignorant of the

state of foreign countries that he often used to say that there were not ten thousand men in all Europe ; and it had never occurred to him as possible that the English would dare to invade his dominions. But, though undisturbed by any fear of their military power, he began to miss them greatly. His revenues fell off ; and his ministers succeeded in making him understand that a ruler may sometimes find it more profitable to protect traders in the open enjoyment of their gains than to put them to the torture for the purpose of discovering hidden chests of gold and jewels. He was already disposed to permit the Company to resume its mercantile operations in his country, when he received the news that an English armament was in the Hoogly. He instantly ordered all his troops to assemble at Moorshedabad, and marched towards Calcutta.

Clive had commenced operations with his usual vigor. He took Budgebudge, routed the garrison of Fort William, recovered Calcutta, stormed and sacked Hoogly. The Nabob, already disposed to make some concessions to the English, was confirmed in his pacific disposition by these proofs of their power and spirit. He accordingly made overtures to the chiefs of the invading armament, and offered to restore the factory, and to give compensation to those whom he had despoiled.

Clive's profession was war ; and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Surajah Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee, chiefly composed of servants of the Company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs ; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts and compensated for their losses. The

government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The promises of the Nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful ; and Clive consented to treat, though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished.

With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier, carrying into effect, with eminent ability and valor, the plans of others. Henceforth he is to be chiefly regarded as a statesman; and his military movements are to be considered as subordinate to his political designs. That in his new capacity he displayed great ability, and obtained great success, is unquestionable. But it is also unquestionable that the transactions in which he now began to take a part have left a stain on his moral character.

We can by no means agree with Sir John Malcolm, who is obstinately resolved to see nothing but honor and integrity in the conduct of his hero. But we can as little agree with Mr. Mill, who has gone so far as to say that Clive was a man "to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang." Clive seems to us to have been constitutionally the very opposite of a knave, bold even to temerity, sincere even to indiscretion, hearty in friendship, open in enmity. Neither in his private life, nor in those parts of his public life in which he had to do with his countrymen, do we find any signs of a propensity to cunning. On the contrary, in all the disputes in which he was engaged as an Englishman against Englishmen, from his boxing-

matches at school to those stormy altercations at the India House and in Parliament amidst which his later years were passed, his very faults were those of a high and magnanimous spirit. The truth seems to have been that he considered Oriental politics as a game in which nothing was unfair. He knew that the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honor—with men who would give any promise without hesitation and break any promise without shame ; with men who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show that the great difference between Asiatic and European morality was constantly in his thoughts. He seems to have imagined, most erroneously in our opinion, that he could effect nothing against such adversaries if he were content to be bound by ties from which they were free ; if he went on telling truth, and hearing none ; if he fulfilled, to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept an engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly this man, in the other parts of his life an honorable English gentleman and soldier, was no sooner matched against an Indian intriguer than he became himself an Indian intriguer, and descended, without scruple, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands.

The negotiations between the English and the Nabob were carried on chiefly by two agents—Mr. Watts, a servant of the Company, and a Bengalee of the name of Omichund. This Omichund had been one of the wealthiest native merchants resident at Calcutta, and

had sustained great losses in consequence of the Nabob's expedition against that place. In the course of his commercial transactions he had seen much of the English, and was peculiarly qualified to serve as a medium of communication between them and a native court. He possessed great influence with his own race, and had in large measure the Hindoo talents (quick observation, tact, dexterity, perseverance) and the Hindoo vices (servility, greediness, and treachery).

The Nabob behaved with all the faithlessness of an Indian statesman, and with all the levity of a boy whose mind had been enfeebled by power and self-indulgence. He promised, retracted, hesitated, evaded. At one time he advanced with his army in a threatening manner towards Calcutta ; but when he saw the resolute front which the English presented he fell back in alarm, and consented to make peace with them on their own terms. The treaty was no sooner concluded than he formed new designs against them. He intrigued with the French authorities at Chandernagore. He invited Bussy to march from the Deccan to the Hoogly, and to drive the English out of Bengal. All this was well known to Clive and Watson. They determined accordingly to strike a decisive blow, and to attack Chandernagore before the force there could be stengthened by new arrivals, either from the south of India or from Europe. Watson directed the expedition by water, Clive by land. The success of the combined movements was rapid and complete. The fort, the garrison, the artillery, the military stores, all fell into the hands of the English. Near five hundred European troops were among the prisoners.

The Nabob had feared and hated the English even

while he was still able to oppose to them their French rivals. The French were now vanquished ; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed. The next day he sent a present of jewels to Bussy, exhorting that distinguished officer to hasten to protect Bengal "against Clive, the daring in war, on whom," says his Highness, "may all bad fortune attend." He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and threatened to impale him. He again sent for Watts, and begged pardon for the insult. In the meantime, his wretched maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company had disgusted all classes of his subjects—soldiers, traders, civil functionaries ; the proud and ostentatious Mahometans, the timid, supple, and parsimonious Hindoos. A formidable confederacy was formed against him, in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance ; Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of the troops ; and Jugget Seit, the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malcontents at Moorshedabad and the committee at Calcutta.

In the committee there was much hesitation ; but Clive's voice was given in favor of the conspirators, and his vigor and firmness bore down all opposition.

It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Surajah Dowlah, and to place Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. In return, Meer Jaffier promised ample compensation to the Company and its servants, and a liberal donative to the army, the navy, and the committee. The odious vices of Surajah Dowlah, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which our trade must have been exposed had he continued to reign, appear to us fully to justify the resolution of deposing him. But nothing can justify the dissimulation which Clive stooped to practise. He wrote to Surajah Dowlah in terms so affectionate that they for a time lulled that weak prince into perfect security. The same courier who carried this "soothing letter," as Clive calls it, to the Nabob carried to Mr. Watts a letter in the following terms: "Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing. I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left."

It was impossible that a plot which had so many ramifications should long remain entirely concealed. Enough reached the ears of the Nabob to arouse his suspicions. But he was soon quieted by the fictions and artifices which the inventive genius of Omichund produced with miraculous readiness. All was going well; the plot was nearly ripe, when Clive learned that Omichund was likely to play false. The artful Bengalee had been promised a liberal compensation for all that he had lost at Calcutta. But this would not satisfy him. His services had been great. He held the thread of the whole intrigue. By one word breathed

in the ear of Surajah Dowlah he could undo all that had been done. The lives of Watts, of Meer Jaffier, of all the conspirators, were at his mercy ; and he determined to take advantage of his situation and to make his own terms. He demanded three hundred thousand pounds sterling as the price of his secrecy and of his assistance. The committee, incensed by the treachery and appalled by the danger, knew not what course to take. But Clive was more than Omichund's match in Omichund's own arts. The man, he said, was a villain. Any artifice which would defeat such knavery was justifiable. The best course would be to promise what was asked. Omichund would soon be at their mercy, and then they might punish him by withholding from him not only the bribe which he now demanded, but also the compensation which all the other sufferers of Calcutta were to receive.

His advice was taken. But how was this wary and sagacious Hindoo to be deceived ? He had demanded that an article touching his claims should be inserted in the treaty between Meer Jaffier and the English, and he would not be satisfied unless he saw it with his own eyes. Clive had an expedient ready. Two treaties were drawn up—one on white paper, the other on red ; the former real, the latter fictitious. In the former, Omichund's name was not mentioned; the latter, which was to be shown to him, contained a stipulation in his favor.

But another difficulty arose. Admiral Watson had scruples about signing the red treaty. Omichund's vigilance and acuteness were such that the absence of so important a name would probably awaken his suspicions. But Clive was not a man to do anything by

halves. We almost blush to write it. He forged Admiral Watson's name.

All was now ready for action. Mr. Watts fled secretly from Moorshedabad. Clive put his troops in motion, and wrote to the Nabob in a tone very different from that of his previous letters. He set forth all the wrongs which the British had suffered, offered to submit the points in dispute to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier, and concluded by announcing that, as the rains were about to set in, he and his men would do themselves the honor of waiting on his Highness for an answer.

Surajah Dowlah instantly assembled his whole force, and marched to encounter the English. It had been agreed that Meer Jaffier should separate himself from the Nabob and carry over his division to Clive. But, as the decisive moment approached, the fears of the conspirator overpowered his ambition. Clive had advanced to Cossimbuzar ; the Nabob lay with a mighty power a few miles off at Plassey ; and still Meer Jaffier delayed to fulfil his engagements, and returned evasive answers to the earnest remonstrances of the English general.

Clive was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate ; and, whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valor and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times as numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit,

during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting, and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards, he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that if he had taken the advice of that council the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put everything to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed, and, at the close of a toilsome day's march, the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in a grove of mango-trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep ; he heard, through the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize, he was in a few hours to contend.

Nor was the rest of Surajah Dowlah more peaceful. His mind, at once weak and stormy, was distracted by wild and horrible apprehensions. Appalled by the greatness and nearness of the crisis, distrusting his captains, dreading every one who approached him, dreading to be left alone, he sat gloomily in his tent, haunted, a Greek poet would have said, by the furies of those who had cursed him with their last breath in the Black Hole.

The day broke—the day which was to decide the fate

of India. At sunrise the army of the Nabob, pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn, not from the effeminate population of Bengal, but from the bolder race which inhabits the northern provinces; and the practised eye of Clive could perceive that both the men and horses were more powerful than those of the Carnatic. The force which he had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English, and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. Conspicuous in the ranks of the little army were the men of the Thirty-ninth Regiment, which still bears on its colors, amidst many honorable additions won under Wellington in Spain and Gascony, the name of Plassey, and the proud motto *Primus in Indis*.

The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was

readily received. He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valor. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable wagons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of near sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But as soon as he saw that the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and, when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next morning he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. He gave evident signs of alarm when a guard was drawn out to receive him with the honors due to his rank. But his apprehensions were speedily removed. Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet camel could carry him,

and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his counsellors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Meer Jaffier had arrived ; and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and, accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

In a few days Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, escorted by two hundred English soldiers and three hundred Sepoys. For his residence had been assigned a palace which was surrounded by a garden so spacious that all the troops who accompanied him could conveniently encamp within it. The ceremony of the installation of Meer Jaffier was instantly performed. Clive led the new Nabob to the seat of honor, placed him on it, presented to him, after the immemorial fashion of the East, an offering of gold, and then, turning to the natives who filled the hall, congratulated them on the good-fortune which had freed them from a tyrant. He was compelled on this occasion to use the services of an interpreter ; for it is remarkable that, long as he resided in India, intimately acquainted as he was with Indian politics and with the Indian character, and adored as he was by his Indian soldiery, he never learned to express himself with facility in any Indian

language. He is said, indeed, to have been sometimes under the necessity of employing, in his intercourse with the natives of India, the smattering of Portuguese which he had acquired when a lad in Brazil.

The new sovereign was now called upon to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with his allies. A conference was held at the house of Jugget Seit, the great banker, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements. Omichund came thither, fully believing himself to stand high in the favor of Clive, who, with dissimulation surpassing even the dissimulation of Bengal, had up to that day treated him with undiminished kindness. The white treaty was produced and read. Clive then turned to Mr. Scrafton, one of the servants of the Company, and said in English, "It is now time to undeceive Omichund." "Omichund," said Mr. Scrafton in Hindostanee, "the red treaty is a trick. You are to have nothing." Omichund fell back insensible into the arms of his attendants. He revived; but his mind was irreparably ruined. Clive, who, though little troubled by scruples of conscience in his dealings with Indian politicians, was not inhuman, seems to have been touched. He saw Omichund a few days later, spoke to him kindly, advised him to make a pilgrimage to one of the great temples of India, in the hope that change of scene might restore his health, and was even disposed, notwithstanding all that had passed, again to employ him in the public service. But from the moment of that sudden shock, the unhappy man sank gradually into idiocy. He, who had formerly been distinguished by the strength of his understanding and the simplicity of his habits, now squandered the remains of his fortune on childish

trinkets, and loved to exhibit himself dressed in rich garments and hung with precious stones. In this abject state he languished a few months, and then died.

We should not think it necessary to offer any remarks for the purpose of directing the judgment of our readers with respect to this transaction, had not Sir John Malcolm undertaken to defend it in all its parts. He regrets, indeed, that it was necessary to employ means so liable to abuse as forgery ; but he will not admit that any blame attaches to those who deceived the deceiver. He thinks that the English were not bound to keep faith with one who kept no faith with them, and that, if they had fulfilled their engagements with the wily Bengalee, so signal an example of successful treason would have produced a crowd of imitators. Now, we will not discuss this point on any rigid principles of morality. Indeed, it is quite unnecessary to do so ; for, looking at the question as a question of expediency in the lowest sense of the word, and using no arguments but such as Machiavelli might have employed in his conferences with Borgia, we are convinced that Clive was altogether in the wrong, and that he committed not merely a crime, but a blunder. That honesty is the best policy is a maxim which we firmly believe to be generally correct, even with respect to the temporal interest of individuals ; but with respect to societies, the rule is subject to still fewer exceptions, and that for this reason, that the life of societies is longer than the life of individuals. It is possible to mention men who have owed great worldly prosperity to breaches of private faith. But we doubt whether it be possible to mention a state which has, on the whole, been a gainer by a breach of public faith. The entire

history of British India is an illustration of the great truth that it is not prudent to oppose perfidy to perfidy, and that the most efficient weapon with which men can encounter falsehood is truth. During a long course of years the English rulers of India, surrounded by allies and enemies whom no engagement could bind, have generally acted with sincerity and uprightness; and the event has proved that sincerity and uprightness are wisdom. English valor and English intelligence have done less to extend and to preserve our Oriental empire than English veracity. All that we could have gained by imitating the doublings, the evasions, the fictions, the perjuries, which have been employed against us, is as nothing when compared with what we have gained by being the one power in India on whose word reliance can be placed. No oath which superstition can devise, no hostage, however precious, inspires a hundredth part of the confidence which is produced by the "yea, yea," and "nay, nay," of a British envoy. No fastness, however strong by art or nature, gives to its inmates a security like that enjoyed by the chief who, passing through the territories of powerful and deadly enemies, is armed with the British guarantee. The mightiest princes of the East can scarcely, by the offer of enormous usury, draw forth any portion of the wealth which is concealed under the hearths of their subjects. The British government offers little more than four per cent.; and avarice hastens to bring forth tens of millions of rupees from its most secret repositories. A hostile monarch may promise mountains of gold to our Sepoys on condition that they will desert the standard of our Company. The Company promises only a moderate pension after a long service. But every

Sepoy knows that the promise of the Company will be kept; he knows that if he lives a hundred years his rice and salt are as secure as the salary of the Governor-general; and he knows that there is not another state in India which would not, in spite of the most solemn vows, leave him to die of hunger in a ditch as soon as he had ceased to be useful. The greatest advantage which a government can possess is to be the one trustworthy government in the midst of governments which nobody can trust. This advantage we enjoy in Asia. Had we acted during the last two generations on the principles which Sir John Malcolm appears to have considered as sound; had we, as often as we had to deal with people like Omichund, retaliated by lying and forging, and breaking faith, after their fashion, it is our firm belief that no courage or capacity could have upheld our empire.

Sir John Malcolm admits that Clive's breach of faith could be justified only by the strongest necessity. As we think that breach of faith not only unnecessary, but most inexpedient, we need hardly say that we altogether condemn it.

Omichund was not the only victim of the revolution. Surajah Dowlah was taken a few days after his flight, and was brought before Meer Jaffier. There he flung himself on the ground in convulsions of fear, and with tears and loud cries implored the mercy which he had never shown. Meer Jaffier hesitated; but his son Meeran, a youth of seventeen, who in feebleness of brain and savageness of nature greatly resembled the wretched captive, was implacable. Surajah Dowlah was led into a secret chamber, to which in a short time the ministers of death were sent. In this act the Eng-

lish bore no part ; and Meer Jaffier understood so much of their feelings that he thought it necessary to apologize to them for having avenged them on their most malignant enemy.

The shower of wealth now fell copiously on the Company and its servants. A sum of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in coined silver, was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Fort William. The fleet which conveyed this treasure consisted of more than a hundred boats, and performed its triumphal voyage with flags flying and music playing. Calcutta, which a few months before had been desolate, was now more prosperous than ever. Trade revived, and the signs of affluence appeared in every English house. As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation. The treasury of Bengal was thrown open to him. There were piled up, after the usage of Indian princes, immense masses of coin, among which might not seldom be detected the florins and byzants with which, before any European ship had turned the Cape of Good Hope, the Venetians purchased the stuffs and spices of the East. Clive walked between heaps of gold and silver, crowned with rubies and diamonds, and was at liberty to help himself. He accepted between two and three hundred thousand pounds.

The pecuniary transactions between Meer Jaffier and Clive were sixteen years later condemned by the public voice, and severely criticised in Parliament. They are vehemently defended by Sir John Malcolm. The accusers of the victorious general represented his gains as the wages of corruption, or as plunder extorted at the point of the sword from a helpless ally. The bio-

grapher, on the other hand, considers these great acquisitions as free gifts, honorable alike to the donor and to the receiver, and compares them to the rewards bestowed by foreign powers on Marlborough, on Nelson, and on Wellington. It had always, he says, been customary in the East to give and receive presents ; and there was, as yet, no act of Parliament positively prohibiting English functionaries in India from profiting by this Asiatic usage. This reasoning, we own, does not quite satisfy us. We do not suspect Clive of selling the interests of his employers or his country ; but we cannot acquit him of having done what, if not in itself evil, was yet of evil example. Nothing is more clear than that a general ought to be the servant of his own government, and of no other. It follows that whatever rewards he receives for his services ought to be given either by his own government, or with the full knowledge and approbation of his own government. This rule ought to be strictly maintained even with respect to the merest bauble ; with respect to a cross, a medal, or a yard of colored ribbon. But how can any government be well served if those who command its forces are at liberty, without its permission, without its privity, to accept princely fortunes from its allies ? It is idle to say that there was then no act of Parliament prohibiting the practice of taking presents from Asiatic sovereigns. It is not on the act which was passed at a later period for the purpose of preventing any such taking of presents, but on grounds which were valid before that act was passed—on grounds of common law and common-sense—that we arraign the conduct of Clive. There is no act, that we know of, prohibiting the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from being

in the pay of Continental powers. But it is not the less true that a Secretary who should receive a secret pension from France would grossly violate his duty, and would deserve severe punishment. Sir John Malcolm compares the conduct of Clive with that of the Duke of Wellington. Suppose—and we beg pardon for putting such a supposition even for the sake of argument—that the Duke of Wellington had, after the campaign of 1815, and while he commanded the army of occupation in France, privately accepted two hundred thousand pounds from Louis the Eighteenth as a mark of gratitude for the great services which his Grace had rendered to the House of Bourbon, what would be thought of such a transaction? Yet the statute-book no more forbids the taking of presents in Europe now than it forbade the taking of presents in Asia then.

At the same time, it must be admitted that, in Clive's case, there were many extenuating circumstances. He considered himself as the general, not of the Crown, but of the Company. The Company had, by implication at least, authorized its agents to enrich themselves by means of the liberality of the native princes, and by other means still more objectionable. It was hardly to be expected that the servant should entertain stricter notions of his duty than were entertained by his masters. Though Clive did not distinctly acquaint his employers with what had taken place, and request their sanction, he did not, on the other hand, by studied concealment, show that he was conscious of having done wrong. On the contrary, he avowed with the greatest openness that the Nabob's bounty had raised him to affluence. Lastly, though we think that he

ought not in such a way to have taken anything, we must admit that he deserves praise for having taken so little. He accepted twenty lacs of rupees. It would have cost him only a word to make the twenty forty. It was a very easy exercise of virtue to declaim in England against Clive's rapacity; but not one in a hundred of his accusers would have shown so much self-command in the treasury of Moorshedabad.

Meer Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which had placed him on it. He was not, indeed, a mere boy; nor had he been so unfortunate as to be born in the purple. He was not, therefore, quite so imbecile or quite so depraved as his predecessor had been. But he had none of the talents or virtues which his post required ; and his son and heir, Meeran, was another Surajah Dowlah. The recent revolution had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new Nabob. The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government. While things were in this state a ship arrived with despatches which had been written at the India House before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The Directors had determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner ; and, to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honor, took on themselves the responsibility of disobeying these preposter-

ous orders, and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented ; and it soon appeared that the servants of the Company had only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The Directors, on receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their possessions in Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the South of India. Meer Jaffier regarded him with slavish awe. On one occasion the Nabob spoke with severity to a native chief of high rank whose followers had been engaged in a brawl with some of the Company's Sepoys. "Are you yet to learn," he said, "who that Colonel Clive is, and in what station God has placed him?" The chief, who as a famous jester and an old friend of Meer Jaffier, could venture to take liberties, answered, "I affront the Colonel! I, who never get up in the morning without making three low bows to his jackass!" This was hardly an exaggeration. Europeans and natives were alike at Clive's feet. The English regarded him as the only man who could force Meer Jaffier to keep his engagements with them. Meer Jaffier regarded him as the only man who could protect the new dynasty against turbulent subjects and encroaching neighbors.

It is but justice to say that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition against the tract lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this tract the French still had the ascendency; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was intrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little

known, but in whom the keen eye of the Governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.

While a considerable part of the army of Bengal was thus engaged at a distance, a new and formidable danger menaced the western frontier. The Great Mogul was a prisoner at Delhi in the hands of a subject. His eldest son, named Shah Alum, destined to be, during many years, the sport of adverse fortune, and to be a tool in the hands, first of the Mahrattas, and then of the English, had fled from the palace of his fathers. His birth was still revered in India. Some powerful princes, the Nabob of Oude in particular, were inclined to favor him. Shah Alum found it easy to draw to his standard great numbers of the military adventurers with whom every part of the country swarmed. An army of forty thousand men, of various races and religions—Mahrattas, Rohillas, Jauts, and Afghans—was speedily assembled round him ; and he formed the design of overthrowing the upstart whom the English had elevated to a throne, and of establishing his own authority throughout Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

Meer Jaffier's terror was extreme ; and the only expedient which occurred to him was to purchase, by the payment of a large sum of money, an accommodation with Shah Alum. This expedient had been repeatedly employed by those who, before him, had ruled the rich and unwarlike provinces near the mouth of the Ganges. But Clive treated the suggestion with a scorn worthy of his strong sense and dauntless courage. " If you do this," he wrote, " you will have the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts of

the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you have none left in your treasury. I beg your Excellency will rely on the fidelity of the English, and of those troops which are attached to you." He wrote in a similar strain to the Governor of Patna, a brave native soldier whom he highly esteemed. "Come to no terms; defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are stanch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

He kept his word. Shah Alum had invested Patna, and was on the point of proceeding to storm, when he learned that the Colonel was advancing by forced marches. The whole army which was approaching consisted of only four hundred and fifty Europeans, and two thousand five hundred Sepoys. But Clive and his Englishmen were now objects of dread over all the East. As soon as his advanced guard appeared, the besiegers fled before him. A few French adventurers who were about the person of the prince advised him to try the chance of battle; but in vain. In a few days this great army, which had been regarded with so much uneasiness by the Court of Moorshedabad, melted away before the mere terror of the British name.

The conqueror returned in triumph to Fort William. The joy of Meer Jaffier was as unbounded as his fears had been, and led him to bestow on his preserver a princely token of gratitude. The quit-rent which the East India Company were bound to pay to the Nabob for the extensive lands held by them to the south of Calcutta amounted to near thirty thousand pounds sterling a year. The whole of this splendid estate, sufficient to support with dignity the highest rank

of the British peerage, was now conferred on Clive for life.

This present we think Clive justified in accepting. It was a present which, from its very nature, could be no secret. In fact, the Company itself was his tenant, and, by its acquiescence, signified its approbation of Meer Jaffier's grant.

But the gratitude of Meer Jaffier did not last long. He had for some time felt that the powerful ally who had set him up might pull him down, and had been looking round for support against the formidable strength by which he had himself been hitherto supported. He knew that it would be impossible to find among the natives of India any force which would look the Colonel's little army in the face. The French power in Bengal was extinct. But the fame of the Dutch had anciently been great in the Eastern seas; and it was not yet distinctly known in Asia how much the power of Holland had declined in Europe. Secret communications passed between the Court of Moorshedabad and the Dutch factory at Chinsurah; and urgent letters were sent from Chinsurah exhorting the government of Batavia to fit out an expedition which might balance the power of the English in Bengal. The authorities of Batavia, eager to extend the influence of their country, and still more eager to obtain for themselves a share of the wealth which had recently raised so many English adventurers to opulence, equipped a powerful armament. Seven large ships from Java arrived unexpectedly in the Hoogly. The military force on board amounted to fifteen hundred men, of whom about one half were Europeans. The enterprise was well timed. Clive had sent such large detachments

to oppose the French in the Carnatic that his army was now inferior in number to that of the Dutch. He knew that Meer Jaffier secretly favored the invaders. He knew that he took on himself a serious responsibility if he attacked the forces of a friendly power ; that the English ministers could not wish to see a war with Holland added to that in which they were already engaged with France ; that they might disavow his acts ; that they might punish him. He had recently remitted a great part of his fortune to Europe through the Dutch East India Company ; and he had, therefore, a strong interest in avoiding any quarrel. But he was satisfied that if he suffered the Batavian armament to pass up the river and to join the garrison of Chinsurah, Meer Jaffier would throw himself into the arms of these new allies, and that the English ascendency in Bengal would be exposed to most serious danger. He took his resolution with characteristic boldness, and was most ably seconded by his officers, particularly by Colonel Forde, to whom the most important part of the operations was intrusted. The Dutch attempted to force a passage. The English encountered them both by land and water. On both elements the enemy had a great superiority of force. On both they were signally defeated. Their ships were taken. Their troops were put to a total rout. Almost all the European soldiers, who constituted the main strength of the invading army, were killed or taken. The conquerors sat down before Chinsurah ; and the chiefs of that settlement, now thoroughly humbled, consented to the terms which Clive dictated. They engaged to build no fortifications, and to raise no troops beyond a small force necessary for the police of

their factories ; and it was distinctly provided that any violation of these covenants should be punished with instant expulsion from Bengal.

Three months after this great victory, Clive sailed for England. At home honors and rewards awaited him, not, indeed, equal to his claims or to his ambition, but still such as, when his age, his rank in the army, and his original place in society are considered, must be pronounced rare and splendid. He was raised to the Irish peerage and encouraged to expect an English title. George the Third, who had just ascended the throne, received him with great distinction. The ministers paid him marked attention ; and Pitt, whose influence in the House of Commons and in the country was unbounded, was eager to mark his regard for one whose exploits had contributed so much to the lustre of that memorable period. The great orator had already in Parliament described Clive as a heaven-born general, as a man who, bred to the labor of the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the King of Prussia. There were then no reporters in the gallery ; but these words, emphatically spoken by the first statesman of the age, had passed from mouth to mouth, had been transmitted to Clive in Bengal, and had greatly delighted and flattered him. Indeed, since the death of Wolfe, Clive was the only English general of whom his countrymen had much reason to be proud. The Duke of Cumberland had been generally unfortunate ; and his single victory, having been gained over his countrymen, and used with merciless severity, had been more fatal to his popularity than his many defeats. Conway, versed in the learning of his profession, and personally courage-

ous, wanted vigor and capacity. Granby, honest, generous, and as brave as a lion, had neither science nor genius. Sackville, inferior in knowledge and abilities to none of his contemporaries, had incurred, unjustly as we believe, the imputation most fatal to the character of a soldier. It was under the command of a foreign general that the British had triumphed at Minden and Warburg. The people, therefore, as was natural, greeted with pride and delight a captain of their own, whose native courage and self-taught skill had placed him on a level with the great tacticians of Germany.

The wealth of Clive was such as enabled him to vie with the first grandees of England. There remains proof that he had remitted more than a hundred and eighty thousand pounds through the Dutch East India Company, and more than forty thousand pounds through the English Company. The amount which he sent home through private houses was also considerable. He had invested great sums in jewels, then a very common mode of remittance from India. His purchases of diamonds at Madras alone amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds. Besides a great mass of ready money, he had his Indian estate, valued by himself at twenty-seven thousand a year. His whole annual income, in the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, who is desirous to state it as low as possible, exceeded forty thousand pounds ; and incomes of forty thousand pounds at the time of the accession of George the Third were at least as rare as incomes of a hundred thousand pounds now. We may safely affirm that no Englishman who started with nothing has ever, in any line of life, created such a fortune at the early age of thirty-four.

It would be unjust not to add that Clive made a creditable use of his riches. As soon as the battle of Plassey had laid the foundation of his fortune, he sent ten thousand pounds to his sisters, bestowed as much more on other poor friends and relations, ordered his agent to pay eight hundred a year to his parents, and to insist that they should keep a carriage, and settled five hundred a year on his old commander, Lawrence, whose means were very slender. The whole sum which Clive expended in this manner may be calculated at fifty thousand pounds.

He now set himself to cultivate parliamentary interest. His purchases of land seem to have been made in a great measure with that view, and, after the general election of 1761 he found himself in the House of Commons at the head of a body of dependents whose support must have been important to any administration. In English politics, however, he did not take a prominent part. His first attachments, as we have seen, were to Mr. Fox. At a later period he was attracted by the genius and success of Mr. Pitt ; but finally he connected himself in the closest manner with George Grenville. Early in the session of 1764, when the illegal and impolitic persecution of that worthless demagogue Wilkes had strongly excited the public mind, the town was amused by an anecdote which we have seen in some unpublished memoirs of Horace Walpole. Old Mr. Richard Clive, who, since his son's elevation, had been introduced into society for which his former habits had not well fitted him, presented himself at the levee. The King asked him where Lord Clive was. "He will be in town very soon," said the old gentleman, loud enough to be heard by

the whole circle, "and then your Majesty will have another vote."

But, in truth, all Clive's views were directed towards the country in which he had so eminently distinguished himself as a soldier and a statesman; and it was by considerations relating to India that his conduct as a public man in England was regulated. The power of the Company, though an anomaly, is in our time, we are firmly persuaded, a beneficial anomaly. In the time of Clive it was not merely an anomaly, but a nuisance. There was no Board of Control. The Directors were, for the most part, mere traders, ignorant of general politics, ignorant of the peculiarities of the empire which had strangely become subject to them. The Court of Proprietors, wherever it chose to interfere, was able to have its way. That court was more numerous, as well as more powerful, than at present; for then every share of five hundred pounds conferred a vote. The meetings were large, stormy, even riotous, the debates indecently virulent. All the turbulence of a Westminster election, all the trickery and corruption of a Grampound election, disgraced the proceedings of this assembly on questions of the most solemn importance. Fictitious votes were manufactured on a gigantic scale. Clive himself laid out a hundred thousand pounds in the purchase of stock, which he then divided among nominal proprietors on whom he could depend, and whom he brought down in his train to every discussion and every ballot. Others did the same, though not to quite so enormous an extent.

The interest taken by the public of England in Indian questions was then far greater than at present, and the

reason is obvious. At present a writer enters the service young ; he climbs slowly ; he is fortunate if, at forty-five, he can return to his country with an annuity of a thousand a year, and with savings amounting to thirty thousand pounds. A great quantity of wealth is made by English functionaries in India ; but no single functionary makes a very large fortune, and what is made is slowly, hardly, and honestly earned. Only four or five high political offices are reserved for public men from England. The residencies, the secretaryships, the seats in the boards of revenue and in the Sudder courts, are all filled by men who have given the best years of life to the service of the Company ; nor can any talents, however splendid, or any connections, however powerful, obtain those lucrative posts for any person who has not entered by the regular door and mounted by the regular gradations. Seventy years ago, less money was brought home from the East than in our time. But it was divided among a very much smaller number of persons, and immense sums were often accumulated in a few months. Any Englishman, whatever his age might be, might hope to be one of the lucky emigrants. If he made a good speech in Leadenhall Street, or published a clever pamphlet in defence of the chairman, he might be sent out in the Company's service, and might return in three or four years as rich as Pigot or as Clive. Thus the India House was a lottery-office, which invited everybody to take a chance, and held out ducal fortunes as the prizes destined for the lucky few. As soon as it was known that there was a part of the world where a lieutenant-colonel had one morning received as a present an estate as large as that of the Earl of Bath or the Marquess of Rocking-

ham, and where it seemed that such a trifle as ten or twenty thousand pounds was to be had by any British functionary for the asking, society began to exhibit all the symptoms of the South-sea year—a feverish excitement, an ungovernable impatience to be rich, a contempt for slow, sure, and moderate gains.

At the head of the preponderating party in the India House had long stood a powerful, able, and ambitious director of the name of Sulivan. He had conceived a strong jealousy of Clive, and remembered with bitterness the audacity with which the late Governor of Bengal had repeatedly set at naught the authority of the distant Directors of the Company. An apparent reconciliation took place after Clive's arrival; but enmity remained deeply rooted in the hearts of both. The whole body of Directors was then chosen annually. At the election of 1763, Clive attempted to break down the power of the dominant faction. The contest was carried on with a violence which he describes as tremendous. Sulivan was victorious, and hastened to take his revenge. The grant of rent which Clive had received from Meer Jaffier was, in the opinion of the best English lawyers, valid. It had been made by exactly the same authority from which the Company had received their chief possessions in Bengal, and the Company had long acquiesced in it. The Directors, however, most unjustly determined to confiscate it, and Clive was forced to file a bill in Chancery against them.

But a great and sudden turn in affairs was at hand. Every ship from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings. The internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a point that it could go no

further. What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants exposed to temptation such that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, ill-informed Company, situated at such a distance that the average interval between the sending of a despatch and the receipt of an answer was above a year and a half? Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing-birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators and flocks of camelopards; the Spanish viceroy who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico or Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter-horses trapped and shod with silver, were now outdone. Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the Company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to be rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another Nabob, named Meer Cossim. But Meer Cossim had parts and a will; and, though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit—nay, which destroyed his revenue in the very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim, and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer

Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the Nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together in the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign and who could unmake him. The servants of the Company obtained, not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly of almost the whole internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and to sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependents who ranged through the provinces, spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master ; and his master was armed with all the power of the Company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the Company thicker than the loins of Surajah Dowlah. Under their old masters they had at least one resource : when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization. It resembled the government of evil Genii rather than the government of human tyrants.

Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of English breed, the hereditary nobility of mankind, whose skill and valor had so often triumphed in spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man, as their fathers had been used to fly from the Mahratta ; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages and towns, which the report of his approach had made desolate.

The foreign lords of Bengal were naturally objects of hatred to all the neigboring powers ; and to all the haughty race presented a dauntless front. The English armies, everywhere outnumbered, were everywhere victorious. A succession of commanders, formed in the school of Clive, still maintained the fame of their country. "It must be acknowledged," says the Mussulman historian of those times, "that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence ; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array and fighting in order. If to so many military qualifications they knew how to join the arts of government, if they exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving the people of God as they do in whatever concerns their military affairs, no nation in the world would be preferable to them or worthier of command. But the people under their dominion groan everywhere, and are reduced to poverty and distress. O God ! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions which they suffer."

It was impossible, however, that even the military establishment should long continue exempt from the vices which pervaded every other part of the government. Rapacity, luxury, and the spirit of insubordination spread from the civil service to the officers of the army, and from the officers to the soldiers. The evil continued to grow till every messroom became the seat of conspiracy and cabal, and till the Sepoys could be kept in order only by wholesale executions.

At length the state of things in Bengal began to excite uneasiness at home. A succession of revolutions ; a disorganized administration ; the natives pillaged, yet the Company not enriched ; every fleet bringing back fortunate adventurers who were able to purchase manors and to build stately dwellings, yet bringing back also alarming accounts of the financial prospects of the government ; war on the frontiers, disaffection in the army; the national character disgraced by excesses resembling those of Verres and Pizarro—such was the spectacle which dismayed those who were conversant with Indian affairs. The general cry was that Clive, and Clive alone, could save the empire which he had founded.

This feeling manifested itself in the strongest manner at a very full General Court of Proprietors. Men of all parties, forgetting their feuds and trembling for their dividends, exclaimed that Clive was the man whom the crisis required, that the oppressive proceedings which had been adopted respecting his estate ought to be dropped, and that he ought to be entreated to return to India.

Clive rose. As to his estate, he said, he would make such propositions to the Directors as would, he trusted,

lead to an amicable settlement. But there was a still greater difficulty. It was proper to tell them that he never would undertake the government of Bengal while his enemy Sulivan was chairman of the Company. The tumult was violent. Sulivan could scarcely obtain a hearing. An overwhelming majority of the assembly was on Clive's side. Sulivan wished to try the result of a ballot. But, according to the by-laws of the Company, there can be no ballot except on a requisition signed by nine proprietors ; and, though hundreds were present, nine persons could not be found to set their hands to such a requisition.

Clive was in consequence nominated Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the British possessions in Bengal. But he adhered to his declaration, and refused to enter on his office till the event of the next election of Directors should be known. The contest was obstinate; but Clive triumphed. Sulivan, lately absolute master of the India House, was within a vote of losing his own seat ; and both the chairman and the deputy-chairman were friends of the new Governor.

Such were the circumstances under which Lord Clive sailed for the third and last time to India. In May, 1765, he reached Calcutta, and he found the whole machine of government even more fearfully disorganized than he had anticipated. Meer Jaffier, who had some time before lost his eldest son, Meeran, had died while Clive was on his voyage out. The English functionaries at Calcutta had already received from home strict orders not to accept presents from the native princes. But, eager for gain, and unaccustomed to respect the commands of their distant, ignorant, and negligent masters, they again set up the throne of Bengal to sale.

About one hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling were distributed among nine of the most powerful servants of the Company ; and, in consideration of this bribe, an infant son of the deceased Nabob was placed on the seat of his father. The news of the ignominious bargain met Clive on his arrival. In a private letter written immediately after his landing to an intimate friend, he poured out his feelings in language which, proceeding from a man so daring, so resolute, and so little given to theatrical display of sentiment, seems to us singularly touching. "Alas!" he says, "how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation—irrecoverably so, I fear. However, I do declare, by that great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable if there be a hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy these great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt."

The Council met, and Clive stated to them his full determination to make a thorough reform, and to use for that purpose the whole of the ample authority, civil and military, which had been confided to him. Johnstone, one of the boldest and worst men in the assembly, made some show of opposition. Clive interrupted him, and haughtily demanded whether he meant to question the power of the new government. Johnstone was cowed, and disclaimed any such intention. All the faces round the board grew long and pale, and not another syllable of dissent was uttered.

Clive redeemed his pledge. He remained in India about a year and a half, and in that short time effected

one of the most extensive, difficult, and salutary reforms that ever was accomplished by any statesman. This was the part of his life on which he afterwards looked back with most pride. He had it in his power to triple his already splendid fortune ; to connive at abuses while pretending to remove them ; to conciliate the good-will of all the English in Bengal by giving up to their rapacity a helpless and timid race, who knew not where lay the island which sent forth their oppressors, and whose complaints had little chance of being heard across fifteen thousand miles of ocean. He knew that if he applied himself in earnest to the work of reformation, he should raise every bad passion in arms against him. He knew how unscrupulous, how implacable, would be the hatred of those ravenous adventurers who, having counted on accumulating in a few months fortunes sufficient to support peerages, should find all their hopes frustrated. But he had chosen the good part, and he called up all the force of his mind for a battle far harder than that of Plassey. At first success seemed hopeless ; but soon all obstacles began to bend before that iron courage and that vehement will. The receiving of presents from the natives was rigidly prohibited. The private trade of the servants of the Company was put down. The whole settlement seemed to be set, as one man, against these measures. But the inexorable Governor declared that if he could not find support at Fort William he would procure it elsewhere, and sent for some civil servants from Madras to assist him in carrying on the administration. The most factious of his opponents he turned out of their offices. The rest submitted to what was inevitable, and in a very short time all resistance was quelled.

But Clive was far too wise a man not to see that the recent abuses were partly to be ascribed to a cause which could not fail to produce similar abuses as soon as the pressure of his strong hand was withdrawn. The Company had followed a mistaken policy with respect to the remuneration of its servants. The salaries were too low to afford even those indulgences which are necessary to the health and comfort of Europeans in a tropical climate. To lay by a rupee from such scanty pay was impossible. It could not be supposed that men of even average abilities would consent to pass the best years of life in exile, under a burning sun, for no other consideration than these stinted wages. It had accordingly been understood, from a very early period, that the Company's agents were at liberty to enrich themselves by their private trade. This practice had been seriously injurious to the commercial interests of the corporation. That very intelligent observer, Sir Thomas Roe, in the reign of James the First, strongly urged the Directors to apply a remedy to the abuse. "Absolutely prohibit the private trade," said he, "for your business will be better done. I know this is harsh. Men profess they come not for bare wages. But you will take away this plea if you give great wages to their content; and then you know what you part from."

In spite of this excellent advice, the Company adhered to the old system, paid low salaries, and connived at the indirect gains of the agents. The pay of a member of Council was only three hundred pounds a year. Yet it was notorious that such a functionary could not live in India for less than ten times that sum; and it could not be expected that he would be content to live

even handsomely in India without laying up something against the time of his return to England. This system, before the conquest of Bengal, might affect the amount of the dividends payable to the proprietors, but could do little harm in any other way. But the Company was now a ruling body. Its servants might still be called factors, junior merchants, senior merchants. But they were, in truth, proconsuls, proprætors, procurators of extensive regions. They had immense power. Their regular pay was universally admitted to be insufficient. They were, by the ancient usage of the service, and by the implied permission of their employers, warranted in enriching themselves by indirect means ; and this had been the origin of the frightful oppression and corruption which had desolated Bengal. Clive saw clearly that it was absurd to give men power, and to require them to live in penury. He justly concluded that no reform could be effectual which should not be coupled with a plan for liberally remunerating the civil servants of the Company. The Directors, he knew, were not disposed to sanction any increase of the salaries out of their own treasury. The only course which remained open to the Governor was one which exposed him to much misrepresentation, but which we think him fully justified in adopting. He appropriated to the support of the service the monopoly of salt, which has formed, down to our own time, a principal head of Indian revenue ; and he divided the proceeds according to a scale which seems to have been not unreasonably fixed. He was in consequence accused by his enemies, and has been accused by historians, of disobeying his instructions, of violating his promises, of authorizing that very abuse which it was

his special mission to destroy—namely, the trade of the Company's servants. But every discerning and impartial judge will admit that there was really nothing in common between the system which he set up and that which he was sent to destroy. The monopoly of salt had been a source of revenue to the governments of India before Clive was born. It continued to be so long after his death. The civil servants were clearly entitled to a maintenance out of the revenue, and all that Clive did was to charge a particular portion of the revenue with their maintenance. He thus, while he put an end to the practices by which gigantic fortunes had been rapidly accumulated, gave to every British functionary employed in the East the means of slowly but surely acquiring a competence. Yet such is the injustice of mankind that none of those acts which are the real stains of his life has drawn on him so much obloquy as this measure, which was, in truth, a reform necessary to the success of all his other reforms.

He had quelled the opposition of the civil service; that of the army was more formidable. Some of the retrenchments which had been ordered by the Directors affected the interests of the military service, and a storm arose such as even Cæsar would not willingly have faced. It was no light thing to encounter the resistance of those who held the power of the sword in a country governed only by the sword. Two hundred English officers engaged in a conspiracy against the government, and determined to resign their commissions on the same day, not doubting that Clive would grant any terms rather than see the army (on which alone the British empire in the East rested) left without commanders. They little knew the unconquerable

spirit with which they had to deal. Clive had still a few officers round his person on whom he could rely. He sent to Fort St. George for a fresh supply. He gave commissions to mercantile agents who were disposed to support him at this crisis, and he sent orders that every officer who resigned should be instantly brought up to Calcutta. The conspirators found that they had miscalculated. The Governor was inexorable. The troops were steady. The Sepoys, over whom Clive had always possessed extraordinary influence, stood by him with unshaken fidelity. The leaders in the plot were arrested, tried, and cashiered. The rest, humbled and dispirited, begged to be permitted to withdraw their resignations. Many of them declared their repentance even with tears. The younger offenders Clive treated with lenity. To the ringleaders he was inflexibly severe, but his severity was pure from all taint of private malevolence. While he sternly upheld the just authority of his office, he passed by personal insults and injuries with magnanimous disdain. One of the conspirators was accused of having planned the assassination of the Governor, but Clive would not listen to the charge. "The officers," he said, "are Englishmen, not assassins."

While he reformed the civil service and established his authority over the army, he was equally successful in his foreign policy. His landing on Indian ground was the signal for immediate peace. The Nabob of Oude, with a large army, lay at that time on the frontier of Bahar. He had been joined by many Afghans and Mahrattas, and there was no small reason to expect a general coalition of all the native powers against the English. But the name of Clive quelled in an in-

stant all opposition. The enemy implored peace in the humblest language, and submitted to such terms as the new Governor chose to dictate.

At the same time, the government of Bengal was placed on a new footing. The power of the English in that province had hitherto been altogether undefined. It was unknown to the ancient constitution of the empire, and it had been ascertained by no compact. It resembled the power which in the last decrepitude of the Western Empire was exercised over Italy by the great chiefs of foreign mercenaries—the Ricimers and the Odoacers—who put up and pulled down at their pleasure a succession of insignificant princes dignified with the names of Cæsar and Augustus. But, as in Italy, so in India, the warlike strangers at length found it expedient to give to a domination which had been established by arms the sanction of law and ancient prescription. Theodoric thought it politic to obtain from the distant court of Byzantium a commission appointing him ruler of Italy; and Clive, in the same manner, applied to the Court of Delhi for a formal grant of the powers of which he already possessed the reality. The Mogul was absolutely helpless, and, though he murmured, had reason to be well pleased that the English were disposed to give solid rupees (which he never could have extorted from them) in exchange for a few Persian characters which cost him nothing. A bargain was speedily struck, and the titular sovereign of Hindostan issued a warrant empowering the Company to collect and administer the revenues of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

There was still a Nabob, who stood to the British authorities in the same relation in which the last

drivelling Chilperics and Childerics of the Merovingian line stood to their able and vigorous Mayors of the Palace, to Charles Martel and to Pepin. At one time Clive had almost made up his mind to discard this phantom altogether ; but he afterwards thought that it might be convenient still to use the name of Nabob, particularly in dealings with other European nations. The French, the Dutch, and the Danes would, he conceived, submit far more readily to the authority of the native Prince, whom they had always been accustomed to respect, than to that of a rival trading corporation. This policy may at that time have been judicious. But the pretence was soon found to be too flimsy to impose on anybody, and it was altogether laid aside. The heir of Meer Jaffier still resides at Moorshedabad, the ancient capital of his house ; still bears the title of Nabob; is still accosted by the English as " Your Highness ; " and is still suffered to retain a portion of the regal state which surrounded his ancestors. A pension of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds a year is annually paid to him by the government. His carriage is surrounded by guards and preceded by attendants with silver maces. His person and his dwelling are exempted from the ordinary authority of the ministers of justice. But he has not the smallest share of political power, and is, in fact, only a noble and wealthy subject of the Company.

It would have been easy for Clive, during his second administration in Bengal, to accumulate riches such as no subject in Europe possessed. He might, indeed, without subjecting the rich inhabitants of the province to any pressure beyond that to which their mildest rulers had accustomed them, have received presents to

the amount of three hundred thousand pounds a year. The neighboring princes would gladly have paid any price for his favor. But he appears to have strictly adhered to the rules which he had laid down for the guidance of others. The Rajah of Benares offered him diamonds of great value. The Nabob of Oude pressed him to accept a large sum of money and a casket of costly jewels. Clive courteously but peremptorily refused ; and it should be observed that he made no merit of his refusal, and that the facts did not come to light till after his death. He kept an exact account of his salary, of his share of the profits accruing from the trade in salt, and of those presents which, according to the fashion of the East, it would be churlish to refuse. Out of the sum arising from these resources he defrayed the expenses of his situation. The surplus he divided among a few attached friends who had accompanied him to India. He always boasted, and, as far as we can judge, he boasted with truth, that his last administration diminished instead of increasing his fortune.

One large sum, indeed, he accepted. Meer Jaffier had left him by will above sixty thousand pounds sterling in specie and jewels ; and the rules which had been recently laid down extended only to presents from the living, and did not affect legacies from the dead. Clive took the money, but not for himself. He made the whole over to the Company in trust for officers and soldiers invalided in their service. The fund which still bears his name owes its origin to this princely donation.

After a stay of eighteen months, the state of his health made it necessary for him to return to Europe. At the close of January, 1767, he quitted for the last

time the country on whose destinies he had exercised so mighty an influence.

His second return from Bengal was not, like his first, greeted by the acclamations of his countrymen. Numerous causes were already at work which embittered the remaining years of his life and hurried him to an untimely grave. His old enemies at the India House were still powerful and active, and they had been reinforced by a large band of allies whose violence far exceeded their own. The whole crew of pilferers and oppressors from whom he had rescued Bengal persecuted him with the implacable rancor which belongs to such abject natures. Many of them even invested their property in India stock merely that they might be better able to annoy the man whose firmness had set bounds to their rapacity. Lying newspapers were set up for no purpose but to abuse him ; and the temper of the public mind was then such that these arts, which under ordinary circumstances would have been ineffectual against truth and merit, produced an extraordinary impression.

The great events which had taken place in India had called into existence a new class of Englishmen, to whom their countrymen gave the name of Nabobs. These persons had generally sprung from families neither ancient nor opulent ; they had generally been sent at an early age to the East ; and they had there acquired large fortunes, which they had brought back to their native land. It was natural that, not having had much opportunity of mixing with the best society, they should exhibit some of the awkwardness and some of the pomposity of upstarts. It was natural that during their sojourn in Asia they should have acquired some

tastes and habits surprising, if not disgusting, to persons who never had quitted Europe. It was natural that, having enjoyed great consideration in the East, they should not be disposed to sink into obscurity at home ; and, as they had money, and had not birth or high connection, it was natural that they should display a little obtrusively the single advantage which they possessed. Wherever they settled there was a kind of feud between them and the old nobility and gentry similar to that which raged in France between the farmer-general and the marquess. This enmity to the aristocracy long continued to distinguish the servants of the Company. More than twenty years after the time of which we are now speaking, Burke pronounced that among the Jacobins might be reckoned "the East Indians almost to a man, who cannot bear to find that their present importance does not bear a proportion to their wealth."

The Nabobs soon became a most unpopular class of men. Some of them had in the East displayed eminent talents and rendered great services to the State ; but at home their talents were not shown to advantage, and their services were little known. That they had sprung from obscurity ; that they had acquired great wealth ; that they exhibited it insolently; that they spent it extravagantly ; that they raised the price of everything in their neighborhood, from fresh eggs to rotten boroughs ; that their liveries outshone those of dukes ; that their coaches were finer than that of the Lord Mayor ; that the examples of their large and ill-governed households corrupted half the servants in the country ; that some of them, with all their magnificence, could not catch the tone of good society ; but,

in spite of the stud and the crowd of menials, of the plate and the Dresden china, of the venison and the burgundy, were still low men; these were things which excited, both in the class from which they had sprung and in the class into which they attempted to force themselves, the bitter aversion which is the effect of mingled envy and contempt. But when it was also rumored that the fortune which had enabled its possessor to eclipse the Lord Lieutenant on the race-ground, or to carry the county against the head of a house as old as Domesday-book, had been accumulated by violating public faith, by deposing legitimate princes, by reducing whole provinces to beggary, all the higher and better, as well as all the low and evil, parts of human nature were stirred against the wretch who had obtained by guilt and dishonor the riches which he now lavished with arrogant and inelegant profusion. The unfortunate Nabob seemed to be made up of those foibles against which comedy has pointed the most merciless ridicule, and of those crimes which have thrown the deepest gloom over tragedy—of Turcaret and Nero, of Monsieur Jourdain and Richard the Third. A tempest of execration and derision such as can be compared only to that outbreak of public feeling against the Puritans which took place at the time of the Restoration burst on the servants of the Company. The humane man was horror-struck at the way in which they had got their money, the thrifty man at the way in which they spent it. The Dilettante sneered at their want of taste. The Macaroni blackballed them as vulgar fellows. Writers the most unlike in sentiment and style, Methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons, were for once on the same side. It is

hardly too much to say that, during a space of about thirty years, the whole lighter literature of England was colored by the feelings which we have described. Foote brought on the stage an Anglo-Indian chief—dissolute, ungenerous, and tyrannical; ashamed of the humble friends of his youth; hating the aristocracy, yet childishly eager to be numbered among them; squandering his wealth on panders and flatterers; tricking out his chairmen with the most costly hothouse flowers; and astounding the ignorant with jargon about rupees, lacs, and jaghires. Mackenzie, with more delicate humor, depicted a plain country family raised by the Indian acquisitions of one of its members to sudden opulence, and exciting derision by an awkward mimicry of the manners of the great. Cowper, in that lofty expostulation which glows with the very spirit of the Hebrew poets, placed the oppression of India foremost in the list of those national crimes for which God had punished England with years of disastrous war, with discomfiture in her own seas, and with the loss of her transatlantic empire. If any of our readers will take the trouble to search in the dusty recesses of circulating-libraries for some novel published sixty years ago, the chance is that the villain, or subvillain, of the story will prove to be a savage old Nabob with an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver, and a worse heart.

Such, as far as we can now judge, was the feeling of the country respecting Nabobs in general. And Clive was eminently the Nabob, the ablest, the most celebrated, the highest in rank, the highest in fortune, of all the fraternity. His wealth was exhibited in a manner which could not fail to excite odium. He lived

with great magnificence in Berkeley Square. He reared one palace in Shropshire and another at Claremont. His parliamentary influence might vie with that of the greatest families. But in all this splendor and power envy found something to sneer at. On some of his relations wealth and dignity seem to have sat as awkwardly as on Mackenzie's Margery Mushroom. Nor was he himself, with all his great qualities, free from those weaknesses which the satirists of that age represented as characteristic of his whole class. In the field, indeed, his habits were remarkably simple. He was constantly on horseback ; was never seen but in his uniform ; never wore silk ; never entered a palanquin, and was content with the plainest fare. But when he was no longer at the head of an army, he laid aside this Spartan temperance for the ostentatious luxury of a Sybarite. Though his person was ungraceful, and though his harsh features were redeemed from vulgar ugliness only by their stern, dauntless, and commanding expression, he was fond of rich and gay clothing, and replenished his wardrobe with absurd profusion. Sir John Malcolm gives us a letter worthy of Sir Matthew Mite, in which Clive orders "two hundred shirts—the best and finest that can be got for love or money." A few follies of this description, grossly exaggerated by report, produced an unfavorable impression on the public mind. But this was not the worst. Black stories, of which the greater part were pure inventions, were circulated touching his conduct in the East. He had to bear the whole odium not only of those bad acts to which he had once or twice stooped, but of all the bad acts of all the English in India ; of bad acts committed when he was absent ; nay, of bad

acts which he had manfully opposed and severely punished. The very abuses against which he had waged an honest, resolute, and successful war were laid to his account. He was, in fact, regarded as the personification of all the vices and weaknesses which the public, with or without reason, ascribed to the English adventurers in Asia. We have ourselves heard old men who knew nothing of his history, but who still retained the prejudices conceived in their youth, talk of him as an incarnate fiend. Johnson always held this language. Brown, whom Clive employed to lay out his pleasure-grounds, was amazed to see in the house of his noble employer a chest which had once been filled with gold from the treasury of Moorshedabad, and could not understand how the conscience of the criminal could suffer him to sleep with such an object so near to his bedchamber. The peasantry of Surrey looked with mysterious horror on the stately house which was rising at Claremont, and whispered that the great wicked Lord had ordered the walls to be made so thick in order to keep out the devil, who would one day carry him away bodily. Among the gaping clowns who drank in this frightful story was a worthless, ugly lad of the name of Hunt, since widely known as William Huntington, S.S.; and the superstition which was strangely mingled with the knavery of that remarkable impostor seems to have derived no small nutriment from the tales which he heard of the life and character of Clive.

In the meantime, the impulse which Clive had given to the administration of Bengal was constantly becoming fainter and fainter. His policy was, to a great extent, abandoned; the abuses which he had suppressed began to revive; and at length the evils which a bad

government had engendered were aggravated by one of those fearful visitations which the best government cannot avert. In the summer of 1770, the rains failed ; the earth was parched up ; the tanks were empty ; the rivers shrank within their beds ; and a famine, such as is known only in countries where every household depends for support on its own little patch of cultivation, filled the whole valley of the Ganges with misery and death. Tender and delicate women, whose veils had never been lifted before the public gaze, came forth from the inner chambers in which Eastern jealousy had kept watch over their beauty, threw themselves on the earth before the passers-by, and with loud wailings implored a handful of rice for their children. The Hoogly every day rolled down thousands of corpses close to the porticoes and gardens of the English conquerors. The very streets of Calcutta were blocked up by the dying and the dead. The lean and feeble survivors had not energy enough to bear the bodies of their kindred to the funeral pile or to the holy river, or even to scare away the jackals and vultures, which fed on human remains in the face of day. The extent of the mortality was never ascertained ; but it was popularly reckoned by millions. This melancholy intelligence added to the excitement which already prevailed in England on Indian subjects. The proprietors of East India stock were uneasy about their dividends. All men of common humanity were touched by the calamities of our unhappy subjects ; and indignation soon began to mingle itself with pity. It was rumored that the Company's servants had created the famine by engrossing all the rice of the country ; that they had sold grain for eight, ten, twelve times the price at which

they had bought it ; that one English functionary who, the year before, was not worth a hundred guineas, had, during that season of misery, remitted sixty thousand pounds to London. These charges we believe to have been unfounded. That servants of the Company had ventured, since Clive's departure, to deal in rice is probable. That if they dealt in rice they must have gained by the scarcity is certain. But there is no reason for thinking that they either produced or aggravated an evil which physical causes sufficiently explain. The outcry which was raised against them on this occasion was, we suspect, as absurd as the imputations which, in times of dearth at home, were once thrown by statesmen and judges, and are still thrown by two or three old women, on the corn-factors. It was, however, so loud and so general that it appears to have imposed even on an intellect raised so high above vulgar prejudices as that of Adam Smith. What was still more extraordinary, these unhappy events greatly increased the unpopularity of Lord Clive. He had been some years in England when the famine took place. None of his acts had the smallest tendency to produce such a calamity. If the servants of the Company had traded in rice, they had done so in direct contravention of the rule which he had laid down, and, while in power, had resolutely enforced. But, in the eyes of his countrymen, he was, as we have said, the Nabob, the Anglo-Indian personified ; and while he was building and planting in Surrey, he was held responsible for all the effects of a dry season in Bengal.

Parliament had hitherto bestowed very little attention on our Eastern possessions. Since the death of George the Second, a rapid succession of weak admin-

istrations, each of which was in turn flattered and betrayed by the court, had held the semblance of power. Intrigues in the palace, riots in the capital, and insurrectionary movements in the American colonies had left the advisers of the Crown little leisure to study Indian politics. When they did interfere, their interference was feeble and irresolute. Lord Chatham, indeed, during the short period of his ascendency in the councils of George the Third, had meditated a bold attack on the Company. But his plans were rendered abortive by the strange malady which about that time began to overcloud his splendid genius.

At length, in 1772, it was generally felt that Parliament could no longer neglect the affairs of India. The government was stronger than any which had held power since the breach between Mr. Pitt and the great Whig connection in 1761. No pressing question of domestic or European policy required the attention of public men. There was a short and delusive lull between two tempests. The excitement produced by the Middlesex election was over; the discontents of America did not yet threaten civil war ; the financial difficulties of the Company brought on a crisis ; the ministers were forced to take up the subject ; and the whole storm, which had long been gathering, now broke at once on the head of Clive.

His situation was, indeed, singularly unfortunate. He was hated throughout the country ; hated at the India House ; hated, above all, by those wealthy and powerful servants of the Company whose rapacity and tyranny he had withstood. He had to bear the double odium of his bad and of his good actions, of every Indian abuse, and of every Indian reform. The state of the

political world was such that he could count on the support of no powerful connection. The party to which he had belonged—that of George Grenville—had been hostile to the government, and yet had never cordially united with the other sections of the Opposition, with the little band which still followed the fortunes of Lord Chatham, or with the large and respectable body of which Lord Rockingham was the acknowledged leader. George Grenville was now dead ; his followers were scattered ; and Clive, unconnected with any of the powerful factions which divided the Parliament, could reckon only on the votes of those members who were returned by himself. His enemies, particularly those who were the enemies of his virtues, were unscrupulous, ferocious, implacable. Their malevolence aimed at nothing less than the utter ruin of his fame and fortune. They wished to see him expelled from Parliament, to see his spurs chopped off, to see his estate confiscated ; and it may be doubted whether even such a result as this would have quenched their thirst for revenge.

Clive's parliamentary tactics resembled his military tactics. Deserted, surrounded, outnumbered, and with everything at stake, he did not even deign to stand on the defensive, but pushed boldly forward to the attack. At an early stage of the discussions on Indian affairs he rose, and in a long and elaborate speech vindicated himself from a large part of the accusations which had been brought against him. He is said to have produced a great impression on his audience. Lord Chatham, who, now the ghost of his former self, loved to haunt the scene of his glory, was that night under the gallery of the House of Commons, and declared that he had

never heard a finer speech. It was subsequently printed under Clive's direction, and, when the fullest allowance has been made for the assistance which he may have obtained from literary friends, proves him to have possessed, not merely strong sense and a manly spirit, but talents both for disquisition and declamation which assiduous culture might have improved into the highest excellence. He confined his defence on this occasion to the measures of his last administration, and succeeded so far that his enemies thenceforth thought it expedient to direct their attacks chiefly against the earlier part of his life.

The earlier part of his life unfortunately presented some assailable points to their hostility. A committee was chosen by ballot to inquire into the affairs of India ; and by this committee the whole history of that great revolution which threw down Surajah Dowlah and raised Meer Jaffier was sifted with malignant care. Clive was subjected to the most unsparing examination and cross-examination, and afterwards bitterly complained that he, the Baron of Plassey, had been treated like a sheep-stealer. The boldness and ingeniousness of his replies would alone suffice to show how alien from his nature were the frauds to which, in the course of his Eastern negotiations, he had sometimes descended. He avowed the arts which he had employed to deceive Omichund, and resolutely said that he was not ashamed of them, and that, in the same circumstances, he would again act in the same manner. He admitted that he had received immense sums from Meer Jaffier ; but he denied that, in doing so, he had violated any obligation of morality or honor. He laid claim, on the contrary, and not without some reason, to the

praise of eminent disinterestedness. He described in vivid language the situation in which his victory had placed him ; great princes dependent on his pleasure ; an opulent city afraid of being given up to plunder ; wealthy bankers bidding against each other for his smiles ; vaults piled with gold and jewels thrown open to him alone. "By God, Mr. Chairman," he exclaimed, "at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation !"

The inquiry was so extensive that the Houses rose before it had been completed. It was continued in the following session. When, at length, the committee had concluded its labors, enlightened and impartial men had little difficulty in making up their minds as to the result. It was clear that Clive had been guilty of some acts which it is impossible to vindicate without attacking the authority of all the most sacred laws which regulate the intercourse of individuals and of states. But it was equally clear that he had displayed great talents, and even great virtues ; that he had rendered eminent services both to his country and to the people of India ; and that it was in truth not for his dealings with Meer Jaffier nor for the fraud which he had practised on Omichund, but for his determined resistance to avarice and tyranny, that he was now called in question.

Ordinary criminal justice knows nothing of set-off. The greatest desert cannot be pleaded in answer to a charge of the slightest transgression. If a man has sold beer on Sunday morning, it is no defence that he has saved the life of a fellow-creature at the risk of his own. If he has harnessed a Newfoundland dog to his little child's carriage, it is no defence that he was wounded at Waterloo. But it is not in this way that

we ought to deal with men who, raised far above ordinary restraints, and tried by far more than ordinary temptations, are entitled to a more than ordinary measure of indulgence. Such men should be judged by their contemporaries as they will be judged by posterity. Their bad actions ought not, indeed, to be called good ; but their good and bad actions ought to be fairly weighed ; and if, on the whole, the good preponderate, the sentence ought to be one, not merely of acquittal, but of approbation. Not a single great ruler in history can be absolved by a judge who fixes his eye inexorably on one or two unjustifiable acts. Bruce the deliverer of Scotland, Maurice the deliverer of Germany, William the deliverer of Holland, his great descendant the deliverer of England, Murray the good regent, Cosmo the father of his country, Henry the Fourth of France, Peter the Great of Russia, how would the best of them pass such a scrutiny ? History takes wider views ; and the best tribunal for great political cases is the tribunal which anticipates the verdict of history.

Reasonable and moderate men of all parties felt this in Clive's case. They could not pronounce him blameless ; but they were not disposed to abandon him to that low-minded and rancorous pack who had run him down and were eager to worry him to death. Lord North, though not very friendly to him, was not disposed to go to extremities against him. While the inquiry was still in progress, Clive, who had some years before been created a Knight of the Bath, was installed with great pomp in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. He was soon after appointed Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire. When he kissed hands, George the Third, who had

always been partial to him, admitted him to a private audience, talked to him half an hour on Indian politics, and was visibly affected when the persecuted general spoke of his services and of the way in which they had been requited.

At length the charges came in a definite form before the House of Commons. Burgoyne, chairman of the committee, a man of wit, fashion, and honor, an agreeable dramatic writer, an officer whose courage was never questioned and whose skill was at that time highly esteemed, appeared as the accuser. The members of the administration took different sides ; for in that age all questions were open questions, except such as were brought forward by the government, or such as implied some censure on the government. Thurlow, the Attorney-general, was among the assailants. Wedderburn, the Solicitor-general, strongly attached to Clive, defended his friend with extraordinary force of argument and language. It is a curious circumstance that, some years later, Thurlow was the most conspicuous champion of Warren Hastings, while Wedderburn was among the most unrelenting persecutors of that great, though not faultless, statesman. Clive spoke in his own defence at less length and with less art than in the preceding year, but with much energy and pathos. He recounted his great actions and his wrongs ; and, after bidding his hearers remember that they were about to decide not only on his honor, but on their own, he retired from the House.

The Commons resolved that acquisitions made by the arms of the State belong to the State alone, and that it is illegal in the servants of the State to appropriate such acquisitions to themselves. They resolved that this

wholesome rule appeared to have been systematically violated by the English functionaries in Bengal. On a subsequent day they went a step further, and resolved that Clive had, by means of the power which he possessed as commander of the British forces in India, obtained large sums from Meer Jaffier. Here the Commons stopped. They had voted the major and minor of Burgoyne's syllogism, but they shrank from drawing the logical conclusion. When it was moved that Lord Clive had abused his powers, and set an evil example to the servants of the public, the previous question was put and carried. At length, long after the sun had risen on an animated debate, Wedderburn moved that Lord Clive had at the same time rendered great and meritorious services to his country ; and this motion passed without a division.

The result of this memorable inquiry appears to us, on the whole, honorable to the justice, moderation, and discernment of the Commons. They had, indeed, no great temptation to do wrong. They would have been very bad judges of an accusation brought against Jenkinson or against Wilkes. But the question respecting Clive was not a party question, and the House accordingly acted with the good sense and good feeling which may always be expected from an assembly of English gentlemen not blinded by faction.

The equitable and temperate proceedings of the British Parliament were set off to the greatest advantage by a foil. The wretched government of Louis the Fifteenth had murdered, directly or indirectly, almost every Frenchman who had served his country with distinction in the East. Labourdonnais was flung into the Bastile, and, after years of suffering, left it only to

die. Dupleix, stripped of his immense fortune, and broken-hearted by humiliating attendance in antechambers, sank into an obscure grave. Lally was dragged to the common place of execution with a gag between his lips. The Commons of England, on the other hand, treated their living captain with that discriminating justice which is seldom shown except to the dead. They laid down sound general principles, and they tempered the gentle censure with liberal eulogy. The contrast struck Voltaire, always partial to England, and always eager to expose the abuses of the parliaments of France. Indeed, he seems at this time to have meditated a history of the conquest of Bengal. He mentioned his design to Dr. Moore when that amusing writer visited him at Ferney. Wedderburn took great interest in the matter, and pressed Clive to furnish materials. Had the plan been carried into execution, we have no doubt that Voltaire would have produced a book containing much lively and picturesque narrative, many just and humane sentiments poignantly expressed, many grotesque blunders, many sneers at the Mosaic chronology, much scandal about the Catholic missionaries, and much sublime theophilanthropy stolen from the New Testament and put into the mouths of virtuous and philosophical Brahmins.

Clive was now secure in the enjoyment of his fortune and his honors. He was surrounded by attached friends and relations, and he had not yet passed the season of vigorous bodily and mental exertion. But clouds had long been gathering over his mind, and now settled on it in thick darkness. From early youth he had been subject to fits of that strange melancholy

" which rejoiceth exceedingly and is glad when it can find the grave." While still a writer at Madras, he had twice attempted to destroy himself. Business and prosperity had produced a salutary effect on his spirits. In India, while he was occupied by great affairs ; in England, while wealth and rank had still the charm of novelty, he had borne up against his constitutional misery. But he had now nothing to do and nothing to wish for. His active spirit in an inactive situation drooped and withered like a plant in an uncongenial air. The malignity with which his enemies had pursued him, the indignity with which he had been treated by the committee, the censure (lenient as it was) which the House of Commons had pronounced, the knowledge that he was regarded by a large portion of his countrymen as a cruel and perfidious tyrant, all concurred to irritate and depress him. In the meantime, his temper was tried by acute physical suffering. During his long residence in tropical climates, he had contracted several painful distempers. In order to obtain ease, he called in the help of opium, and he was gradually enslaved by this treacherous ally. To the last, however, his genius occasionally flashed through the gloom. It was said that he would sometimes, after sitting silent and torpid for hours, rouse himself to the discussion of some great question, would display in full vigor all the talents of the soldier and the statesman, and would then sink back into his melancholy repose.

The disputes with America had now become so serious that an appeal to the sword seemed inevitable, and the ministers were desirous to avail themselves of the services of Clive. Had he still been what he was when he raised the siege of Patna, and annihilated the Dutch

army and navy at the mouth of the Ganges, it is not improbable that the resistance of the colonists would have been put down, and that the inevitable separation would have been deferred for a few years. But it was too late. His strong mind was fast sinking under many kinds of suffering. On the twenty-second of November, 1774, he died by his own hand. He had just completed his forty-ninth year.

In the awful close of so much prosperity and glory, the vulgar saw only a confirmation of all their prejudices; and some men of real piety and genius so far forgot the maxims both of religion and of philosophy as confidently to ascribe the mournful event to the just vengeance of God and to the horrors of an evil conscience. It is with very different feelings that we contemplate the spectacle of a great mind ruined by the weariness of satiety, by the pangs of wounded honor, by fatal diseases, and more fatal remedies.

Clive committed great faults, and we have not attempted to disguise them. But his faults, when weighed against his merits and viewed in connection with his temptations, do not appear to us to deprive him of his right to an honorable place in the estimation of posterity.

From his first visit to India dates the renown of the English arms in the East. Till he appeared, his countrymen were despised as mere peddlers, while the French were revered as a people formed for victory and command. His courage and capacity dissolved the charm. With the defence of Arcot commences that long series of Oriental triumphs which closes with the fall of Ghizni. Nor must we forget that he was only twenty-five years old when he approved himself ripe

for military command. This is a rare if not a singular distinction. It is true that Alexander, Condé, and Charles the Twelfth won great battles at a still earlier age ; but those princes were surrounded by veteran generals of distinguished skill, to whose suggestions must be attributed the victories of the Granicus, of Rocroi, and of Narva. Clive, an inexperienced youth, had yet more experience than any of those who served under him. He had to form himself, to form his officers, and to form his army. The only man, as far as we recollect, who at an equally early age ever gave equal proof of talents for war was Napoleon Bonaparte.

From Clive's second visit to India dates the political ascendency of the English in that country. His dexterity and resolution realized, in the course of a few months, more than all the gorgeous visions which had floated before the imagination of Dupleix. Such an extent of cultivated territory, such an amount of revenue, such a multitude of subjects, was never added to the dominion of Rome by the most successful proconsul. Nor were such wealthy spoils ever borne under arches of triumph, down the Sacred Way, and through the crowded Forum, to the threshold of Tarpeian Jove. The fame of those who subdued Antiochus and Tigranes grows dim when compared with the splendor of the exploits which the young English adventurer achieved at the head of an army not equal in numbers to one half of a Roman legion. From Clive's third visit to India dates the purity of the administration of our Eastern empire. When he landed in Calcutta in 1765, Bengal was regarded as a place to which Englishmen were sent only to get rich, by any means, in the shortest possible time. He first made dauntless

and unsparing war on that gigantic system of oppression, extortion, and corruption. In that war he manfully put to hazard his ease, his fame, and his splendid fortune. The same sense of justice which forbids us to conceal or extenuate the faults of his earlier days compels us to admit that those faults were nobly repaired. If the reproach of the Company and of its servants has been taken away; if in India the yoke of foreign masters, elsewhere the heaviest of all yokes, has been found lighter than that of any native dynasty; if to that gang of public robbers which formerly spread terror through the whole plain of Bengal has succeeded a body of functionaries not more highly distinguished by ability and diligence than by integrity, disinterestedness, and public spirit; if we now see such men as Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe, after leading victorious armies, after making and deposing kings, return, proud of their honorable poverty, from a land which once held out to every greedy factor the hope of boundless wealth—the praise is in no small measure due to Clive. His name stands high on the roll of conquerors. But it is found in a better list—in the list of those who have done and suffered much for the happiness of mankind. To the warrior history will assign a place in the same rank with Lucullus and Trajan. Nor will she deny to the reformer a share of that veneration with which France cherishes the memory of Turgot, and with which the latest generations of Hindoos will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck.

LEIGH HUNT. (JANUARY, 1841.)

The Dramatic Works of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, with Biographical and Critical Notices. By LEIGH HUNT. 8vo. London: 1840.

WE have a kindness for Mr. Leigh Hunt. We form our judgment of him, indeed, only from events of universal notoriety, from his own works, and from the works of other writers, who have generally abused him in the most rancorous manner. But, unless we are greatly mistaken, he is a very clever, a very honest, and a very good-natured man. We can clearly discern, together with many merits, many faults both in his writings and in his conduct. But we really think that there is hardly a man living whose merits have been so grudgingly allowed and whose faults have been so cruelly expiated.

In some respects Mr. Leigh Hunt is excellently qualified for the task which he has now undertaken. His style, in spite of its mannerism—nay, partly by reason of its mannerism—is well suited for light, garrulous, desultory *ana*—half critical, half biographical. We do not always agree with his literary judgments; but we find in him what is very rare in our time, the power of justly appreciating and heartily enjoying

good things of very different kinds. He can adore Shakspeare and Spenser without denying poetical genius to the author of Alexander's Feast, or fine observation, rich fancy, and exquisite humor to him who imagined Will Honeycomb and Sir Roger de Coverley. He has paid particular attention to the history of the English drama from the age of Elizabeth down to our own time, and has every right to be heard with respect on that subject.

The plays to which he now acts as introducer are, with few exceptions, such as, in the opinion of many respectable people, ought not to be reprinted. In this opinion we can by no means concur. We cannot wish that any work or class of works which has exercised a great influence on the human mind, and which illustrates the character of an important epoch in letters, politics, and morals, should disappear from the world. If we err in this matter, we err with the gravest men and bodies of men in the empire, and especially with the Church of England and with the great schools of learning which are connected with her. The whole liberal education of our countrymen is conducted on the principle that no book which is valuable, either by reason of the excellence of its style, or by reason of the light which it throws on the history, polity, and manners of nations, should be withheld from the student on account of its impurity. The Athenian comedies, in which there are scarcely a hundred lines together without some passage of which Rochester would have been ashamed, have been reprinted at the Pitt Press and the Clarendon Press under the direction of syndics and delegates appointed by the universities, and have been illustrated with notes by reverend, very reverend, and

right reverend commentators. Every year the most distinguished young men in the kingdom are examined by bishops and professors of divinity in such works as the Lysistrata of Aristophanes and the Sixth Satire of Juvenal. There is certainly something a little ludicrous in the idea of a conclave of venerable fathers of the Church praising and rewarding a lad on account of his intimate acquaintance with writings compared with which the loosest tale in Prior is modest. But, for our own part, we have no doubt that the great societies which direct the education of the English gentry have herein judged wisely. It is unquestionable that an extensive acquaintance with ancient literature enlarges and enriches the mind. It is unquestionable that a man whose mind has been thus enlarged and enriched is likely to be far more useful to the State and to the Church than one who is unskilled, or little skilled, in classical learning. On the other hand, we find it difficult to believe that in a world so full of temptation as this any gentleman whose life would have been virtuous if he had not read Aristophanes and Juvenal will be made vicious by reading them. A man who, exposed to all the influences of such a state of society as that in which we live, is yet afraid of exposing himself to the influences of a few Greek or Latin verses, acts, we think, much like the felon who begged the sheriffs to let him have an umbrella held over his head from the door of Newgate to the gallows because it was a drizzling morning and he was apt to take cold.

The virtue which the world wants is a healthful virtue, not a valetudinarian virtue ; a virtue which can expose itself to the risks inseparable from all spirited exertion, not a virtue which keeps out of the common

air for fear of infection, and eschews the common food as too stimulating. It would be, indeed, absurd to attempt to keep men from acquiring those qualifications which fit them to play their part in life with honor to themselves and advantage to their country for the sake of preserving a delicacy which cannot be preserved—a delicacy which a walk from Westminster to the Temple is sufficient to destroy.

But we should be justly chargeable with gross inconsistency if, while we defend the policy which invites the youth of our country to study such writers as Theocritus and Catullus, we were to set up a cry against a new edition of the Country Wife or the Way of the World. The immoral English writers of the seventeenth century are, indeed, much less excusable than those of Greece and Rome. But the worst English writings of the seventeenth century are decent compared with much that has been bequeathed to us by Greece and Rome. Plato, we have little doubt, was a much better man than Sir George Etherege. But Plato has written things at which Sir George Etherege would have shuddered. Buckhurst and Sedley, even in those wild orgies at the Cock in Bow Street for which they were pelted by the rabble and fined by the Court of King's Bench, would never have dared to hold such discourse as passed between Socrates and Phædrus on that fine summer day under the plane-tree, while the fountain warbled at their feet and cicadas chirped overhead. If it be, as we think it is, desirable that an English gentleman should be well informed touching the government and the manners of little commonwealths which both in place and time are far removed from us, whose independence has been more than two thousand years ex-

tinguished, whose language has not been spoken for ages, and whose ancient magnificence is attested only by a few broken columns and friezes, much more must it be desirable that he should be intimately acquainted with the history of the public mind of his own country, and with the causes, the nature, and the extent of those revolutions of opinion and feeling which during the last two centuries have alternately raised and depressed the standard of our national morality. And knowledge of this sort is to be very sparingly gleaned from parliamentary debates, from state-papers, and from the works of grave historians. It must either not be acquired at all, or it must be acquired by the perusal of the light literature which has at various periods been fashionable. We are therefore by no means disposed to condemn this publication, though we certainly cannot recommend the handsome volume before us as an appropriate Christmas present for young ladies.

We have said that we think the present publication perfectly justifiable. But we can by no means agree with Mr. Leigh Hunt, who seems to hold that there is little or no ground for the charge of immorality so often brought against the literature of the Restoration. We do not blame him for not bringing to the judgment-seat the merciless rigor of Lord Angelo ; but we really think that such flagitious and impudent offenders as those who are now at the bar deserved, at least, the gentle rebuke of Escalus. Mr. Leigh Hunt treats the whole matter a little too much in the easy style of Lucio ; and perhaps his exceeding lenity disposes us to be somewhat too severe.

And yet it is not easy to be too severe. For, in

truth, this part of our literature is a disgrace to our language and our national character. It is clever, indeed, and very entertaining; but it is, in the most emphatic sense of the words, "earthly, sensual, devilish." Its indecency, though perpetually such as is condemned not less by the rules of good taste than by those of morality, is not, in our opinion, so disgraceful a fault as its singularly inhuman spirit. We have here Belial, not as when he inspired Ovid and Ariosto, "graceful and humane," but with the iron eye and cruel sneer of Mephistopheles. We find ourselves in a world in which the ladies are like very profligate, impudent, and unfeeling men, and in which the men are too bad for any place but Pandemonium or Norfolk Island. We are surrounded by foreheads of bronze, hearts like the nether millstone, and tongues set on fire of hell.

Dryden defended or excused his own offences and those of his contemporaries by pleading the example of the earlier English dramatists, and Mr. Leigh Hunt seems to think that there is force in the plea. We altogether differ from this opinion. The crime charged is not mere coarseness of expression. The terms which are delicate in one age become gross in the next. The diction of the English version of the Pentateuch is sometimes such as Addison would not have ventured to imitate; and Addison, the standard of moral purity in his own age, used many phrases which are now proscribed. Whether a thing shall be designated by a plain noun substantive or by a circumlocution is mere matter of fashion. Morality is not at all interested in the question. But morality is deeply interested in this —that what is immoral shall not be presented to the

imagination of the young and susceptible in constant connection with what is attractive. For every person who has observed the operation of the law of association in his own mind and in the minds of others knows that whatever is constantly presented to the imagination in connection with what is attractive will itself become attractive. There is undoubtedly a great deal of indelicate writing in Fletcher and Massinger, and more than might be wished even in Ben Jonson and Shakspeare, who are comparatively pure. But it is impossible to trace in their plays any systematic attempt to associate vice with those things which men value most and desire most, and virtue with everything ridiculous and degrading. And such a systematic attempt we find in the whole dramatic literature of the generation which followed the return of Charles the Second. We will take as an instance of what we mean a single subject of the highest importance to the happiness of mankind—conjugal fidelity. We can at present hardly call to mind a single English play written before the Civil War in which the character of a seducer of married women is represented in a favorable light. We remember many plays in which such persons are baffled, exposed, covered with derision, and insulted by triumphant husbands. Such is the fate of Falstaff, with all his wit and knowledge of the world. Such is the fate of Brisac in Fletcher's Elder Brother, and of Ricardo and Ubaldo in Massinger's Picture. Sometimes, as in the Fatal Dowry and Love's Cruelty, the outraged honor of families is repaired by a bloody revenge. If now and then the lover is represented as an accomplished man, and the husband as a person of weak or odious character, this only makes the triumph

of female virtue the more signal, as in Jonson's Celia and Mrs. Fitzdottrel, and in Fletcher's Maria. In general, we will venture to say that the dramatists of the age of Elizabeth and James the First either treat the breach of the marriage-vow as a serious crime, or, if they treat it as a matter for laughter, turn the laugh against the gallant.

On the contrary, during the forty years which followed the Restoration the whole body of the dramatists invariably represent adultery, we do not say as a peccadillo, we do not say as an error which the violence of passion may excuse, but as the calling of a fine gentleman, as a grace without which his character would be imperfect. It is as essential to his breeding and to his place in society that he should make love to the wives of his neighbors as that he should know French or that he should have a sword at his side. In all this there is no passion, and scarcely anything that can be called preference. The hero intrigues just as he wears a wig ; because, if he did not, he would be a queer fellow, a city prig, perhaps a Puritan. All the agreeable qualities are always given to the gallant. All the contempt and aversion are the portion of the unfortunate husband. Take Dryden for example, and compare Woodall with Brainsick, or Lorenzo with Gomez. Take Wycherley, and compare Horner with Pinchwife. Take Vanbrugh, and compare Constant with Sir John Brute. Take Farquhar, and compare Archer with Squire Sullen. Take Congreve, and compare Bellmour with Fondlewife, Careless with Sir Paul Plyant, or Scandal with Foresight. In all these cases, and in many more which might be named, the dramatist evidently does his best to make the person who commits

the injury graceful, sensible, and spirited, and the person who suffers it a fool or a tyrant, or both.

Mr. Charles Lamb, indeed, attempted to set up a defence for this way of writing. The dramatists of the latter part of the seventeenth century are not, according to him, to be tried by the standard of morality which exists, and ought to exist, in real life. Their world is a conventional world. Their heroes and heroines belong, not to England, not to Christendom, but to a Utopia of gallantry, to a Fairyland, where the Bible and Burns's Justice are unknown, where a prank which on this earth would be rewarded with the pillory is merely matter for a peal of elfish laughter. A real Horner, a real Careless, would, it is admitted, be exceedingly bad men. But to predicate morality or immorality of the Horner of Wycherley and the Careless of Congreve is as absurd as it would be to arraign a sleeper for his dreams. "They belong to the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns. When we are among them we are among a chaotic people. We are not to judge them by our usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings, for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated, for no family ties exist among them. There is neither right nor wrong, gratitude or its opposite, claim or duty, paternity or sonship."

This is, we believe, a fair summary of Mr. Lamb's doctrine. We are sure that we do not wish to represent him unfairly. For we admire his genius; we love the kind nature which appears in all his writings; and we cherish his memory as much as if we had known him personally. But we must plainly say that his argument, though ingenious, is altogether sophistical.

Of course, we perfectly understand that it is possible for a writer to create a conventional world in which things forbidden by the Decalogue and the Statute-book shall be lawful, and yet that the exhibition may be harmless, or even edifying. For example, we suppose that the most austere critics would not accuse Fénelon of impiety and immorality on account of his Telemachus and his Dialogues of the Dead. In Telemachus and the Dialogues of the Dead we have a false religion, and consequently a morality which is in some points incorrect. We have a right and a wrong differing from the right and the wrong of real life. It is represented as the first duty of men to pay honor to Jove and Minerva. Philocles, who employs his leisure in making graven images of these deities, is extolled for his piety in a way which contrasts singularly with the expressions of Isaiah on the same subject. The dead are judged by Minos, and rewarded with lasting happiness for actions which Fénelon would have been the first to pronounce splendid sins. The same may be said of Mr. Southey's Mahometan and Hindoo heroes and heroines. In Thalaba, to speak in derogation of the Arabian impostor is blasphemy ; to drink wine is a crime ; to perform ablutions and to pay honor to the holy cities are works of merit. In the Curse of Kehama, Kailyal is commended for her devotion to the statue of Mariataly, the goddess of the poor. But certainly no person will accuse Mr. Southey of having promoted, or intended to promote, either Islamism or Brahminism.

It is easy to see why the conventional worlds of Fénelon and Mr. Southey are unobjectionable. In the first place, they are utterly unlike the real world in which

we live. The state of society, the laws even of the physical world, are so different from those with which we are familiar that we cannot be shocked at finding the morality also very different. But in truth the morality of these conventional worlds differs from the morality of the real world only in points where there is no danger that the real world will ever go wrong. The generosity and docility of Telemachus, the fortitude, the modesty, the filial tenderness of Kailyal, are virtues of all ages and nations. And there was very little danger that the Dauphin would worship Minerva, or that an English damsel would dance, with a bucket on her head, before the statue of Mariataly.

The case is widely different with what Mr. Charles Lamb calls the conventional world of Wycherley and Congreve. Here the garb, the manners, the topics of conversation, are those of the real town and of the passing day. The hero is in all superficial accomplishments exactly the fine gentleman whom every youth in the pit would gladly resemble. The heroine is the fine lady whom every youth in the pit would gladly marry. The scene is laid in some place which is as well known to the audience as their own houses—in St. James's Park, or Hyde Park, or Westminster Hall. The lawyer bustles about with his bag between the Common Pleas and the Exchequer. The Peer calls for his carriage to go to the House of Lords on a private bill. A hundred little touches are employed to make the fictitious world appear like the actual world. And the immorality is of a sort which never can be out of date, and which all the force of religion, law, and public opinion united can but imperfectly restrain.

In the name of art, as well as in the name of virtue,

we protest against the principle that the world of pure comedy is one into which no moral enters. If comedy be an imitation, under whatever conventions, of real life, how is it possible that it can have no reference to the great rule which directs life, and to feelings which are called forth by every incident of life? If what Mr. Charles Lamb says were correct, the inference would be that these dramatists did not in the least understand the very first principles of their craft. Pure landscape-painting into which no light or shade enters, pure portrait-painting into which no expression enters, are phrases less at variance with sound criticism than pure comedy into which no moral enters.

But it is not the fact that the world of these dramatists is a world into which no moral enters. Morality constantly enters into that world, a sound morality and an unsound morality; the sound morality to be insulted, derided, associated with everything mean and hateful; the unsound morality to be set off to every advantage, and inculcated by all methods, direct and indirect. It is not the fact that none of the inhabitants of this conventional world feel reverence for sacred institutions and family ties. Fondlewife, Pinchwife, every person, in short, of narrow understanding and disgusting manners, expresses that reverence strongly. The heroes and heroines, too, have a moral code of their own—an exceedingly bad one, but not, as Mr. Charles Lamb seems to think, a code existing only in the imagination of dramatists. It is, on the contrary, a code actually received and obeyed by great numbers of people. We need not go to Utopia or Fairyland to find them. They are near at hand. Every night some of them cheat at the hells in the Quadrant, and others

pace the Piazza in Covent Garden. Without flying to Nephelococcygia or to the Court of Queen Mab, we can meet with sharpers, bullies, hard-hearted impudent debauchees, and women worthy of such paramours. The morality of the Country Wife and the Old Bachelor is the morality, not, as Mr. Charles Lamb maintains, of an unreal world, but of a world which is a great deal too real. It is the morality, not of a chaotic people, but of low town-rakes, and of those ladies whom the newspapers call "dashing Cyprians." And the question is simply this, whether a man of genius who constantly and systematically endeavors to make this sort of character attractive, by uniting it with beauty, grace, dignity, spirit, a high social position, popularity, literature, wit, taste, knowledge of the world, brilliant success in every undertaking, does or does not make an ill use of his powers. We own that we are unable to understand how this question can be answered in any way but one.

It must, indeed, be acknowledged, in justice to the writers of whom we have spoken thus severely, that they were, to a great extent, the creatures of their age. And if it be asked why that age encouraged immorality which no other age would have tolerated, we have no hesitation in answering that this great depravation of the national taste was the effect of the prevalence of Puritanism under the Commonwealth.

To punish public outrages on morals and religion is unquestionably within the competence of rulers. But when a government, not content with requiring decency, requires sanctity, it oversteps the bounds which mark its proper functions. And it may be laid down as a universal rule that a government which attempts more

than it ought will perform less. A lawgiver who, in order to protect distressed borrowers, limits the rate of interest, either makes it impossible for the objects of his care to borrow at all, or places them at the mercy of the worst class of usurers. A lawgiver who, from tenderness for laboring-men, fixes the hours of their work and the amount of their wages, is certain to make them far more wretched than he found them. And so a government which, not content with repressing scandalous excesses, demands from its subjects fervent and austere piety, will soon discover that, while attempting to render an impossible service to the cause of virtue, it has in truth only promoted vice.

For what are the means by which a government can effect its ends? Two only, reward and punishment; powerful means, indeed, for influencing the exterior act, but altogether impotent for the purpose of touching the heart. A public functionary who is told that he will be promoted if he is a devout Catholic, and turned out of his place if he is not, will probably go to mass every morning, exclude meat from his table on Fridays, shrive himself regularly, and perhaps let his superiors know that he wears a hair shirt next his skin. Under a Puritan government, a person who is apprised that piety is essential to thriving in the world will be strict in the observance of the Sunday, or, as he will call it, Sabbath, and will avoid a theatre as if it were plague-stricken. Such a show of religion as this the hope of gain and the fear of loss will produce, at a week's notice, in any abundance which a government may require. But under this show sensuality, ambition, avarice, and hatred retain unimpaired power, and the seeming convert has only added to the vices of a man

of the world all the still darker vices which are engendered by the constant practice of dissimulation. The truth cannot be long concealed. The public discovers that the grave persons who are proposed to it as patterns are more utterly destitute of moral principle and of moral sensibility than avowed libertines. It sees that these Pharisees are further removed from real goodness than publicans and harlots. And, as usual, it rushes to the extreme opposite to that which it quits. It considers a high religious profession as a sure mark of meanness and depravity. On the very first day on which the restraint of fear is taken away, and on which men can venture to say what they think, a frightful peal of blasphemy and ribaldry proclaims that the short-sighted policy which aimed at making a nation of saints has made a nation of scoffers.

It was thus in France about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Louis the Fourteenth in his old age became religious; he determined that his subjects should be religious too; he shrugged his shoulders and knitted his brows if he observed at his levee or near his dinner-table any gentleman who neglected the duties enjoined by the Church, and rewarded piety with blue ribbons, invitations to Marli, governments, pensions, and regiments. Forthwith Versailles became, in everything but dress, a convent. The pulpits and confessionals were surrounded by swords and embroidery. The Marshals of France were much in prayer; and there was hardly one among the dukes and peers who did not carry good little books in his pocket, fast during Lent, and communicate at Easter. Madame de Maintenon, who had a great share in the blessed work, boasted that devotion had become quite the

fashion. A fashion, indeed, it was ; and like a fashion it passed away. No sooner had the old king been carried to St. Denis than the whole court unmasked. Every man hastened to indemnify himself, by the excess of licentiousness and impudence, for years of mortification. The same persons who, a few months before, with meek voices and demure looks, had consulted divines about the state of their souls, now surrounded the midnight table where, amidst the bounding of champagne corks, a drunken prince, enthroned between Dubois and Madame de Parabère, hiccoughed out atheistical arguments and obscene jests. The early part of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth had been a time of license ; but the most dissolute men of that generation would have blushed at the orgies of the Regency.

It was the same with our fathers in the time of the Great Civil War. We are by no means unmindful of the great debt which mankind owes to the Puritans of that time, the deliverers of England, the founders of the American commonwealths. But, in the day of their power, those men committed one great fault which left deep and lasting traces in the national character and manners. They mistook the end, and overrated the force, of government. They determined not merely to protect religion and public morals from insult (an object for which the civil sword, in discreet hands, may be beneficially employed), but to make the people committed to their rule truly devout. Yet if they had only reflected on events which they had themselves witnessed, and in which they had themselves borne a great part, they would have seen what was likely to be the result of their enterprise. They had lived under a

government which, during a long course of years, did all that could be done, by lavish bounty and by rigorous punishment, to enforce conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England. No person suspected of hostility to that Church had the smallest chance of obtaining favor at the court of Charles. Avowed dissent was punished by imprisonment, by ignominious exposure, by cruel mutilations, and by ruinous fines. And the event had been that the Church had fallen, and had, in its fall, dragged down with it a monarchy which had stood six hundred years. The Puritan might have learned, if from nothing else, yet from his own recent victory, that governments which attempt things beyond their reach are likely not merely to fail, but to produce an effect directly the opposite of that which they contemplate as desirable.

All this was overlooked. The saints were to inherit the earth. The theatres were closed. The fine arts were placed under absurd restraints. Vices which had never before been even misdemeanors were made capital felonies. It was solemnly resolved by Parliament "that no person shall be employed but such as the House shall be satisfied of his real godliness." The pious assembly had a Bible lying on the table for reference. If they had consulted it, they might have learned that the wheat and the tares grow together inseparably, and must either be spared together or rooted up together. To know whether a man was really godly was impossible. But it was easy to know whether he had a plain dress, lank hair, no starch in his linen, no gay furniture in his house ; whether he talked through his nose and showed the whites of his eyes ; whether he named his children Assurance, Tribulation, and Maher-

shalal-hash-baz ; whether he avoided Spring Garden when in town, and abstained from hunting and hawking when in the country; whether he expounded hard Scripture to his troop of dragoons, and talked in a committee of ways and means about seeking the Lord. These were tests which could easily be applied. The misfortune was that they were tests which proved nothing. Such as they were, they were employed by the dominant party. And the consequence was that a crowd of impostors in every walk of life began to mimic and to caricature what were then regarded as the outward signs of sanctity. The nation was not duped. The restraints of that gloomy time were such as would have been impatiently borne if imposed by men who were universally believed to be saints. Those restraints became altogether insupportable when they were known to be kept up for the profit of hypocrites. It is quite certain that, even if the royal family had never returned, even if Richard Cromwell or Henry Cromwell had been at the head of the administration, there would have been a great relaxation of manners. Before the Restoration many signs indicated that a period of license was at hand. The Restoration crushed for a time the Puritan party and placed the supreme power in the hands of a libertine. The political counter-revolution assisted the moral counter-revolution, and was in turn assisted by it. A period of wild and desperate dissoluteness followed. Even in remote manor-houses and hamlets the change was in some degree felt, but in London the outbreak of debauchery was appalling ; and in London the places most deeply infected were the Palace, the quarters inhabited by the aristocracy, and the Inns of Court. It was on the sup-

port of these parts of the town that the playhouses depended. The character of the drama became conformed to the character of its patrons. The comic poet was the mouthpiece of the most deeply corrupted part of a corrupted society. And in the plays before us we find, distilled and condensed, the essential spirit of the fashionable world during the anti-Puritan reaction.

The Puritan had affected formality ; the comic poet laughed at decorum. The Puritan had frowned at innocent diversions ; the comic poet took under his patronage the most flagitious excesses. The Puritan had canted ; the comic poet blasphemed. The Puritan had made an affair of gallantry felony without benefit of clergy; the comic poet represented it as an honorable distinction. The Puritan spoke with disdain of the low standard of popular morality; his life was regulated by a far more rigid code ; his virtue was sustained by motives unknown to men of the world. Unhappily it had been amply proved in many cases, and might well be suspected in many more, that these high pretensions were unfounded. Accordingly the fashionable circles, and the comic poets who were the spokesmen of those circles, took up the notion that all professions of piety and integrity were to be construed by the rule of contrary; that it might well be doubted whether there was such a thing as virtue in the world ; but that, at all events, a person who affected to be better than his neighbors was sure to be a knave.

In the old drama there had been much that was reprehensible. But whoever compares even the least decorous plays of Fletcher with those contained in the volume before us will see how much the profligacy which follows a period of overstrained austerity goes

beyond the profligacy which precedes such a period. The nation resembled the demoniac in the New Testament. The Puritans boasted that the unclean spirit was cast out. The house was empty, swept, and garnished ; and for a time the expelled tenant wandered through dry places seeking rest and finding none. But the force of the exorcism was spent. The fiend returned to his abode, and returned not alone. He took to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself. They entered in and dwelt together ; and the second possession was worse than the first.

We will now, as far as our limits will permit, pass in review the writers to whom Mr. Leigh Hunt has introduced us. Of the four, Wycherley stands, we think, last in literary merit, but first in order of time, and first, beyond all doubt, in immorality.

William Wycherley was born in 1640. He was the son of a Shropshire gentleman of old family and of what was then accounted a good estate. The property was estimated at six hundred a year—a fortune which, among the fortunes at that time, probably ranked as a fortune of two thousand a year would rank in our days.

William was an infant when the Civil War broke out ; and while he was still in his rudiments a Presbyterian hierarchy and a republican government were established on the ruins of the ancient Church and throne. Old Mr. Wycherley was attached to the royal cause, and was not disposed to intrust the education of his heir to the solemn Puritans who now ruled the universities and public schools. Accordingly the young gentleman was sent, at fifteen, to France. He resided some time in the neighborhood of the Duke of Mon-

tausier, chief of one of the noblest families of Touraine. The Duke's wife, a daughter of the House of Rambouillet, was a finished specimen of those talents and accomplishments for which her race was celebrated. The young foreigner was introduced to the splendid circle which surrounded the Duchess, and there he appears to have learned some good and some evil. In a few years he returned to his country a fine gentleman and a Papist. His conversion, it may safely be affirmed, was the effect, not of any strong impression on his understanding or feelings, but partly of intercourse with an agreeable society in which the Church of Rome was the fashion, and partly of that aversion to Calvinistic austerities which was then almost universal among young Englishmen of parts and spirit, and which at one time seemed likely to make one half of them Catholics and the other half Atheists.

But the Restoration came. The universities were again in loyal hands; and there was reason to hope that there would be again a national Church fit for a gentleman. Wycherley became a member of Queen's College, Oxford, and abjured the errors of the Church of Rome. The somewhat equivocal glory of turning, for a short time, a good-for-nothing Papist into a good-for-nothing Protestant is ascribed to Bishop Barlow.

Wycherley left Oxford without taking a degree, and entered at the Temple, where he lived gayly for some years, observing the humors of the town, enjoying its pleasures, and picking up just as much law as was necessary to make the character of a pettifogging attorney or of a litigious client entertaining in a comedy.

From an early age he had been in the habit of amus-

ing himself by writing. Some wretched lines of his on the Restoration are still extant. Had he devoted himself to the making of verses, he would have been nearly as far below Tate and Blackmore as Tate and Blackmore are below Dryden. His only chance for renown would have been that he might have occupied a niche in a satire between Flecknoe and Settle. There was, however, another kind of composition in which his talents and acquirements qualified him to succeed, and to that he judiciously betook himself.

In his old age he used to say that he wrote Love in a Wood at nineteen, the Gentleman Dancing-master at twenty-one, the Plain Dealer at twenty-five, and the Country Wife at one or two and thirty. We are incredulous, we own, as to the truth of this story. Nothing that we know of Wycherley leads us to think him incapable of sacrificing truth to vanity. And his memory in the decline of his life played him such strange tricks that we might question the correctness of his assertion without throwing any imputation on his veracity. It is certain that none of his plays was acted till 1672, when he gave Love in a Wood to the public. It seems improbable that he should resolve, on so important an occasion as that of a first appearance before the world, to run his chance with a feeble piece written before his talents were ripe, before his style was formed, before he had looked abroad into the world ; and this when he had actually in his desk two highly finished plays, the fruit of his matured powers. When we look minutely at the pieces themselves, we find in every part of them reason to suspect the accuracy of Wycherley's statement. In the first scene of Love in a Wood, to go no further, we find many pas-

sages which he could not have written when he was nineteen. There is an allusion to gentlemen's periwigs, which first came into fashion in 1663 ; an allusion to guineas, which were first struck in 1663 ; an allusion to the vests which Charles ordered to be worn at court in 1666 ; an allusion to the fire of 1666 ; and several political allusions which must be assigned to times later than the year of the Restoration—to times when the government and the city were opposed to each other, and when the Presbyterian ministers had been driven from the parish churches to the conventicles. But it is needless to dwell on particular expressions. The whole air and spirit of the piece belong to a period subsequent to that mentioned by Wycherley. As to the Plain Dealer, which is said to have been written when he was twenty-five, it contains one scene unquestionably written after 1675, several which are later than 1668, and scarcely a line which can have been composed before the end of 1666.

Whatever may have been the age at which Wycherley composed his plays, it is certain that he did not bring them before the public till he was upwards of thirty. In 1672, Love in a Wood was acted with more success than it deserved, and this event produced a great change in the fortunes of the author. The Duchess of Cleveland cast her eyes upon him, and was pleased with his appearance. This abandoned woman, not content with her complaisant husband and her royal keeper, lavished her fondness on a crowd of paramours of all ranks from dukes to rope-dancers. In the time of the Commonwealth she commenced her career of gallantry, and terminated it under Anne by marrying, when a great-grandmother, that worthless fop Beau

Fielding. It is not strange that she should have regarded Wycherley with favor. His figure was commanding, his countenance strikingly handsome, his look and deportment full of grace and dignity. He had, as Pope said long after, "the true nobleman look," the look which seems to indicate superiority, and a not unbecoming consciousness of superiority. His hair, indeed, as he says in one of his poems, was prematurely gray. But in that age of periwigs this misfortune was of little importance. The Duchess admired him, and proceeded to make love to him after the fashion of the coarse-minded and shameless circle to which she belonged. In the Ring, when the crowd of beauties and fine gentlemen was thickest, she put her head out of her coach-window and bawled to him, "Sir, you are a rascal; you are a villain;" and, if she is not belied, she added another phrase of abuse which we will not quote, but of which we may say that it might most justly have been applied to her own children. Wycherley called on her Grace the next day, and with great humility begged to know in what way he had been so unfortunate as to disoblige her. Thus began an intimacy from which the poet probably expected wealth and honors. Nor were such expectations unreasonable. A handsome young fellow about the court known by the name of Jack Churchill was, about the same time, so lucky as to become the object of a short-lived fancy of the Duchess. She had presented him with four thousand five hundred pounds, the price, in all probability, of some title or pardon. The prudent youth had lent the money on high interest and on landed security; and this judicious investment was the beginning of the most splendid private fortune in

Europe. Wycherley was not so lucky. The partiality with which the great lady regarded him was indeed the talk of the whole town ; and sixty years later old men who remembered those days told Voltaire that she often stole from the court to her lover's chambers in the Temple disguised like a country-girl, with a straw hat on her head, pattens on her feet, and a basket in her hand. The poet was, indeed, too happy and proud to be discreet. He dedicated to the Duchess the play which had led to their acquaintance, and in the dedication expressed himself in terms which could not but confirm the reports which had gone abroad. But at Whitehall such an affair was regarded in no serious light. The lady was not afraid to bring Wycherley to court, and to introduce him to a splendid society with which, as far as appears, he had never before mixed. The easy king, who allowed to his mistresses the same liberty which he claimed for himself, was pleased with the conversation and manners of his new rival. So high did Wycherley stand in the royal favor that once, when he was confined by a fever to his lodgings in Bow Street, Charles, who, with all his faults, was certainly a man of social and affable disposition, called on him, sat by his bed, advised him to try change of air, and gave him a handsome sum of money to defray the expense of a journey. Buckingham, then Master of the Horse and one of that infamous ministry known by the name of the Cabal, had been one of the Duchess's innumerable paramours. He at first showed some symptoms of jealousy ; but he soon, after his fashion, veered round from anger to fondness, and gave Wycherley a commission in his own regiment and a place in the royal household.

It would be unjust to Wycherley's memory not to mention here the only good action, as far as we know, of his whole life. He is said to have made great exertions to obtain the patronage of Buckingham for the illustrious author of Hudibras, who was now sinking into an obscure grave, neglected by a nation proud of his genius, and by a court which he had served too well. His Grace consented to see poor Butler, and an appointment was made. But unhappily two pretty women passed by ; the volatile Duke ran after them ; the opportunity was lost, and could never be regained.

The second Dutch war—the most disgraceful war in the whole history of England—was now raging. It was not in that age considered as by any means necessary that a naval officer should receive a professional education. Young men of rank who were hardly able to keep their feet in a breeze served on board of the King's ships, sometimes with commissions, and sometimes as volunteers. Mulgrave, Dorset, Rochester, and many others left the playhouses and the Mall for hammocks and salt pork, and, ignorant as they were of the rudiments of naval service, showed, at least, on the day of battle the courage which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman. All good judges of maritime affairs complained that under this system the ships were grossly mismanaged, and that the tarpaulins contracted the vices, without acquiring the graces, of the court. But on this subject, as on every other where the interests or whims of favorites were concerned, the government of Charles was deaf to all remonstrances. Wycherley did not choose to be out of the fashion. He embarked, was present at a battle, and celebrated

it on his return in a copy of verses too bad for the bellman.[1]

About the same time he brought on the stage his second piece, the Gentleman Dancing-master. The biographers say nothing, as far as we remember, about the fate of this play. There is, however, reason to believe that, though certainly far superior to Love in a Wood, it was not equally successful. It was first tried at the west end of the town, and, as the poet confessed, "would scarce do there." It was then performed in Salisbury Court, but, as it should seem, with no better event; for in the prologue to the Country Wife Wycherley described himself as "the late so baffled scribbler."

In 1675 the Country Wife was performed with brilliant success, which, in a literary point of view, was not

[1] Mr. Leigh Hunt supposes that the battle at which Wycherley was present was that which the Duke of York gained over Opdam in 1665. We believe that it was one of the battles between Rupert and De Ruyter in 1673.

The point is of no importance, and there cannot be said to be much evidence either way. We offer, however, to Mr. Leigh Hunt's consideration three arguments, of no great weight certainly, yet such as ought, we think, to prevail in the absence of better. First, it is not very likely that a young Templar quite unknown in the world—and Wycherley was such in 1665—should have quitted his chambers to go to sea. On the other hand, it would be in the regular course of things that, when a courtier and an equerry, he should offer his services. Secondly, his verses appear to have been written after a drawn battle, like those of 1673, and not after a complete victory like that of 1665. Thirdly, in the epilogue to the *Gentleman Dancing-master*, written in 1673, he says that "all gentlemen must pack to sea," an expression which makes it probable that he did not himself mean to stay behind.

wholly unmerited. For, though one of the most profligate and heartless of human compositions, it is the elaborate production of a mind not, indeed, rich, original, or imaginative, but ingenious, observant, quick to seize hints, and patient of the toil of polishing.

The Plain Dealer, equally immoral and equally well written, appeared in 1677. At first this piece pleased the people less than the critics ; but after a time its unquestionable merits and the zealous support of Lord Dorset, whose influence in literary and fashionable society was unbounded, established it in the public favor.

The fortune of Wycherley was now in the zenith, and began to decline. A long life was still before him. But it was destined to be filled with nothing but shame and wretchedness, domestic dissensions, literary failures, and pecuniary embarrassments.

The King, who was looking about for an accomplished man to conduct the education of his natural son, the young Duke of Richmond, at length fixed on Wycherley. The poet, exulting in his good luck, went down to amuse himself at Tunbridge Wells, looked into a bookseller's shop on the Pantiles, and, to his great delight, heard a handsome woman ask for the Plain Dealer, which had just been published. He made acquaintance with the lady, who proved to be the Countess of Drogheda, a gay young widow with an ample jointure. She was charmed with his person and his wit, and, after a short flirtation, agreed to become his wife. Wycherley seems to have been apprehensive that this connection might not suit well with the King's plans respecting the Duke of Richmond. He accordingly prevailed on the lady to consent to a private

marriage. All came out. Charles thought the conduct of Wycherley both disrespectful and disingenuous. Other causes probably assisted to alienate the sovereign from the subject who had lately been so highly favored. Buckingham was now in opposition, and had been committed to the Tower, not, as Mr. Leigh Hunt supposes, on a charge of treason, but by an order of the House of Lords for some expressions which he had used in debate. Wycherley wrote some bad lines in praise of his imprisoned patron, which, if they came to the knowledge of the King, would certainly have made his Majesty very angry. The favor of the court was completely withdrawn from the poet. An amiable woman with a large fortune might, indeed, have been an ample compensation for the loss. But Lady Drogheda was ill-tempered, imperious, and extravagantly jealous. She had herself been a maid of honor at Whitehall. She well knew in what estimation conjugal fidelity was held among the fine gentlemen there, and watched her town husband as assiduously as Mr. Pinchwife watched his country wife. The unfortunate wit was, indeed, allowed to meet his friends at a tavern opposite to his own house. But on such occasions the windows were always open, in order that her ladyship, who was posted on the other side of the street, might be satisfied that no woman was of the party.

The death of Lady Drogheda released the poet from this distress ; but a series of disasters, in rapid succession, broke down his health, his spirits, and his fortune. His wife meant to leave him a good property, and left him only a lawsuit. His father could not, or would not, assist him. Wycherley was at length thrown into the Fleet, and lanquished there during

seven years, utterly forgotten, as it should seem, by the gay and lively circle of which he had been a distinguished ornament. In the extremity of his distress, he implored the publisher who had been enriched by the sale of his works to lend him twenty pounds, and was refused. His comedies, however, still kept possession of the stage, and drew great audiences which troubled themselves little about the situation of the author. At length James the Second, who had now succeeded to the throne, happened to go to the theatre on an evening when the Plain Dealer was acted. He was pleased by the performance, and touched by the fate of the writer, whom he probably remembered as one of the gayest and handsomest of his brother's courtiers. The King determined to pay Wycherley's debts, and to settle on the unfortunate poet a pension of two hundred pounds a year. This munificence on the part of a prince who was little in the habit of rewarding literary merit, and whose whole soul was devoted to the interests of his Church, raises in us a surmise which Mr. Leigh Hunt will, we fear, pronounce very uncharitable. We cannot help suspecting that it was at this time that Wycherley returned to the communion of the Church of Rome. That he did return to the communion of the Church of Rome is certain. The date of his reconversion, as far as we know, has never been mentioned by any biographer. We believe that if we place it at this time we do no injustice to the character either of Wycherley or James.

Not long after, old Mr. Wycherley died ; and his son, now past the middle of life, came to the family estate. Still, however, he was not at his ease. His embarrassments were great ; his property was strictly tied up ;

and he was on very bad terms with the heir-at-law. He appears to have led, during a long course of years, that most wretched life, the life of a vicious old boy about town. Expensive tastes with little money, and licentious appetites with declining vigor, were the just penance for his early irregularities. A severe illness had produced a singular effect on his intellect. His memory played him pranks stranger than almost any that are to be found in the history of that strange faculty. It seemed to be at once preternaturally strong and preternaturally weak. If a book was read to him before he went to bed, he would wake the next morning with his mind full of the thoughts and expressions which he had heard over night; and he would write them down without in the least suspecting that they were not his own. In his verses the same ideas, and even the same words, came over and over again several times in a short composition. His fine person bore the marks of age, sickness, and sorrow; and he mourned for his departed beauty with an effeminate regret. He could not look without a sigh at the portrait which Lely had painted of him when he was only twenty-eight, and often murmured, *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* He was still nervously anxious about his literary reputation, and, not content with the fame which he still possessed as a dramatist, was determined to be renowned as a satirist and an amatory poet. In 1704, after twenty-seven years of silence, he again appeared as an author. He put forth a large folio of miscellaneous verses, which, we believe, has never been reprinted. Some of these pieces had probably circulated through the town in manuscript. For, before the volume appeared, the critics at the coffee-houses very

confidently predicted that it would be utterly worthless, and were in consequence bitterly reviled by the poet in an ill-written, foolish, and egotistical preface. The book amply vindicated the most unfavorable prophecies that had been hazarded. The style and versification are beneath criticism ; the morals are those of Rochester. For Rochester, indeed, there was some excuse. When his offences against decorum were committed, he was a very young man, misled by a prevailing fashion. Wycherley was sixty-four. He had long outlived the times when libertinism was regarded as essential to the character of a wit and a gentleman. Most of the rising poets—Addison, for example, John Philips, and Rowe—were studious of decency. We can hardly conceive anything more miserable than the figure which the ribald old man makes in the midst of so many sober and well-conducted youths.

In the very year in which this bulky volume of obscene doggerel was published, Wycherley formed an acquaintance of a very singular kind. A little, pale, crooked, sickly, bright-eyed urchin, just turned of sixteen, had written some copies of verses in which discerning judges could detect the promise of future eminence. There was, indeed, as yet nothing very striking or original in the conceptions of the young poet. But he was already skilled in the art of metrical composition. His diction and his music were not those of the great old masters ; but that which his ablest contemporaries were laboring to do he already did best. His style was not richly poetical ; but it was always neat, compact, and pointed. His verse wanted variety of pause, of swell, and of cadence, but never grated

harshly on the ear, or disappointed it by a feeble close. The youth was already free of the company of wits, and was greatly elated at being introduced to the author of the Plain Dealer and the Country Wife.

It is curious to trace the history of the intercourse which took place between Wycherley and Pope, between the representative of the age that was going out and the representative of the age that was coming in, between the friend of Rochester and Buckingham, and the friend of Lyttelton and Mansfield. At first the boy was enchanted by the kindness and condescension of so eminent a writer, haunted his door, and followed him about like a spaniel from coffee-house to coffee-house. Letters full of affection, humility, and fulsome flattery were interchanged between the friends. But the first ardor of affection could not last. Pope, though at no time scrupulously delicate in his writings or fastidious as to the morals of his associates, was shocked by the indecency of a rake who, at seventy, was still the representative of the monstrous profligacy of the Restoration. As the youth grew older, as his mind expanded and his fame rose, he appreciated both himself and Wycherley more correctly. He felt a just contempt for the old gentleman's verses, and was at no great pains to conceal his opinion. Wycherley, on the other hand, though blinded by self-love to the imperfections of what he called his poetry, could not but see that there was an immense difference between his young companion's rhymes and his own. He was divided between two feelings. He wished to have the assistance of so skilful a hand to polish his lines; and yet he shrank from the humiliation of being beholden for literary assistance to a lad who might have been his

grandson. Pope was willing to give assistance, but was by no means disposed to give assistance and flattery too. He took the trouble to retouch whole reams of feeble, stumbling verses, and inserted many vigorous lines which the least skilful reader will distinguish in an instant. But he thought that by these services he acquired a right to express himself in terms which would not, under ordinary circumstances, become one who was addressing a man of four times his age. In one letter he tells Wycherley that "the worst pieces are such as, to render them very good, would require almost the entire new writing of them." In another, he gives the following account of his corrections: "Though the whole be as short again as at first, there is not one thought omitted but what is a repetition of something in your first volume, or in this very paper; and the versification throughout is, I believe, such as nobody can be shocked at. The repeated permission you give me of dealing freely with you will, I hope, excuse what I have done; for if I have not spared you when I thought severity would do you a kindness, I have not mangled you where I thought there was no absolute need of amputation." Wycherley continued to return thanks for all this hacking and hewing, which was, indeed, of inestimable service to his compositions. But at last his thanks began to sound very like reproaches. In private, he is said to have described Pope as a person who could not cut out a suit, but who had some skill in turning old coats. In his letters to Pope, while he acknowledged that the versification of the poems had been greatly improved, he spoke of the whole art of versification with scorn, and sneered at those who preferred sound to sense. Pope revenged

himself for this outbreak of spleen by return of post. He had in his hands a volume of Wycherley's rhymes, and he wrote to say that this volume was so full of faults that he could not correct it without completely defacing the manuscript. "I am," he said, "equally afraid of sparing you, and of offending you by too impudent a correction." This was more than flesh and blood could bear. Wycherley reclaimed his papers, in a letter in which resentment shows itself plainly through the thin disguise of civility. Pope, glad to be rid of a troublesome and inglorious task, sent back the deposit, and, by way of a parting courtesy, advised the old man to turn his poetry into prose, and assured him that the public would like his thoughts much better without his versification. Thus ended this memorable correspondence.

Wycherley lived some years after the termination of the strange friendship which we have described. The last scene of his life was, perhaps, the most scandalous. Ten days before his death, at seventy-five, he married a young girl, merely in order to injure his nephew—an act which proves that neither years, nor adversity, nor what he called his philosophy, nor either of the religions which he had at different times professed, had taught him the rudiments of morality. He died in December, 1715, and lies in the vault under the Church of St. Paul in Covent Garden.

His bride soon after married a Captain Shrimpton, who thus became possessed of a large collection of manuscripts. These were sold to a bookseller. They were so full of erasures and interlineations that no printer could decipher them. It was necessary to call in the aid of a professed critic ; and Theobald, the editor

of Shakspeare, and the hero of the first Dunciad, was employed to ascertain the true reading. In this way a volume of miscellanies in verse and prose was got up for the market. The collection derives all its value from the traces of Pope's hand, which are everywhere discernible.

Of the moral character of Wycherley it can hardly be necessary for us to say more. His fame as a writer rests wholly on his comedies, and chiefly on the last two. Even as a comic writer, he was neither of the best school, nor highest in his school. He was in truth a worse Congreve. His chief merit, like Congreve's, lies in the style of his dialogue. But the wit which lights up the Plain Dealer and the Country Wife is pale and flickering when compared with the gorgeous blaze which dazzles us almost to blindness in Love for Love and the Way of the World. Like Congreve, and, indeed, even more than Congreve, Wycherley is ready to sacrifice dramatic propriety to the liveliness of his dialogue. The poet speaks out of the mouths of all his dunces and coxcombs, and makes them describe themselves with a good sense and acuteness which puts them on a level with the wits and heroes. We will give two instances, the first which occur to us, from the Country Wife. There are in the world fools who find the society of old friends insipid, and who are always running after new companions. Such a character is a fair subject for comedy. But nothing can be more absurd than to introduce a man of this sort saying to his comrade, "I can deny thee nothing; for though I have known thee a great while, never go if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance." That town-wits, again, have always been rather a heartless class is true. But none

of them, we will answer for it, ever said to a young lady to whom he was making love, "We wits rail and make love often, but to show our parts; as we have no affections, so we have no malice."

Wycherley's plays are said to have been the produce of long and patient labor. The epithet of "slow" was early given to him by Rochester, and was frequently repeated. In truth, his mind, unless we are greatly mistaken, was naturally a very meagre soil, and was forced only by great labor and outlay to bear fruit which, after all, was not of the highest flavor. He had scarcely more claim to originality than Terence. It is not too much to say that there is hardly anything of the least value in his plays of which the hint is not to be found elsewhere. The best scenes in the Gentleman Dancing-master were suggested by Calderon's Maestro de Danzar, not by any means one of the happiest comedies of the great Castilian poet. The Country Wife is borrowed from the École des Maris and the École des Femmes. The groundwork of the Plain Dealer is taken from the Misanthrope of Molière. One whole scene is almost translated from the Critique de l'École des Femmes. Fidelia is Shakspeare's Viola stolen, and marred in the stealing; and the Widow Blackacre, beyond comparison Wycherley's best comic character, is the Countess in Racine's Plaideurs, talking the jargon of English instead of that of French chicane.

The only thing original about Wycherley, the only thing which he could furnish from his own mind in inexhaustible abundance, was profligacy. It is curious to observe how everything that he touched, however pure and noble, took in an instant the color of his own mind. Compare the École des Femmes with the

Country Wife. Agnes is a simple and amiable girl, whose heart is indeed full of love, but of love sanctioned by honor, morality, and religion. Her natural talents are great. They have been hidden, and, as it might appear, destroyed by an education elaborately bad. But they are called forth into full energy by a virtuous passion. Her lover, while he adores her beauty, is too honest a man to abuse the confiding tenderness of a creature so charming and inexperienced. Wycherley takes this plot into his hands; and forthwith this sweet and graceful courtship becomes a licentious intrigue of the lowest and least sentimental kind, between an impudent London rake and the idiot wife of a country squire. We will not go into details. In truth, Wycherley's indecency is protected against the critics as a skunk is protected against the hunters. It is safe, because it is too filthy to handle, and too noisome even to approach.

It is the same with the Plain Dealer. How careful has Shakspeare been in Twelfth Night to preserve the dignity and delicacy of Viola under her disguise! Even when wearing a page's doublet and hose, she is never mixed up with any transaction which the most fastidious mind could regard as leaving a stain on her. She is employed by the Duke on an embassy of love to Olivia, but on an embassy of the most honorable kind. Wycherley borrows Viola, and Viola forthwith becomes a pander of the basest sort. But the character of Manly is the best illustration of our meaning. Molière exhibited in his Misanthrope a pure and noble mind which had been sorely vexed by the sight of perfidy and malevolence, disguised under the forms of politeness. As every extreme naturally generates its con-

trary, Alceste adopts a standard of good and evil directly opposed to that of the society which surrounds him. Courtesy seems to him a vice ; and those stern virtues which are neglected by the fops and coquettes of Paris become too exclusively the objects of his veneration. He is often to blame ; he is often ridiculous ; but he is always a good man ; and the feeling which he inspires is regret that a person so estimable should be so unamiable. Wycherley borrowed Alceste, and turned him—we quote the words of so lenient a critic as Mr. Leigh Hunt—into "a ferocious sensualist, who believed himself as great a rascal as he thought everybody else." The surliness of Molière's hero is copied and caricatured. But the most nauseous libertinism and the most dastardly fraud are substituted for the purity and integrity of the original. And, to make the whole complete, Wycherley does not seem to have been aware that he was not drawing the portrait of an eminently honest man. So depraved was his moral taste that while he firmly believed that he was producing a picture of virtue too exalted for the commerce of this world, he was really delineating the greatest rascal that is to be found, even in his own writings.

We pass a very severe censure on Wycherley when we say that it is a relief to turn from him to Congreve. Congreve's writings, indeed, are by no means pure ; nor was he, as far as we are able to judge, a warm-hearted or high-minded man. Yet, in coming to him, we feel that the worst is over, that we are one remove further from the Restoration, that we are past the nadir of national taste and morality.

William Congreve was born in 1670 at Bardsey, in the neighborhood of Leeds. His father, a younger

son of a very ancient Staffordshire family, had distinguished himself among the Cavaliers in the Civil War, was set down after the Restoration for the Order of the Royal Oak, and subsequently settled in Ireland, under the patronage of the Earl of Burlington.

Congreve passed his childhood and youth in Ireland. He was sent to school at Kilkenny, and thence went to the University of Dublin. His learning does great honor to his instructors. From his writings, it appears not only that he was well acquainted with Latin literature, but that his knowledge of the Greek poets was such as was not, in his time, common even in a college.

When he had completed his academical studies, he was sent to London to study the law, and was entered of the Middle Temple. He troubled himself, however, very little about pleading or conveyancing, and gave himself up to literature and society. Two kinds of ambition early took possession of his mind, and often pulled it in opposite directions. He was conscious of great fertility of thought and power of ingenious combination. His lively conversation, his polished manners, and his highly respectable connections had obtained for him ready access to the best company. He longed to be a great writer. He longed to be a man of fashion. Either object was within his reach. But could he secure both? Was there not something vulgar in letters, something inconsistent with the easy apathetic graces of a man of the mode? Was it aristocratical to be confounded with creatures who lived in the cock-lofts of Grub Street; to bargain with publishers; to hurry printers' devils and be hurried by them; to squabble with managers; to be applauded or hissed by pit, boxes, and galleries? Could he forego

the renown of being the first wit of his age? Could he attain that renown without sullying what he valued quite as much—his character for gentility? The history of his life is the history of a conflict between these two impulses. In his youth the desire of literary fame had the mastery; but soon the meaner ambition overpowered the higher, and obtained supreme dominion over his mind.

His first work, a novel of no great value, he published under the assumed name of Cleophil. His second was the Old Bachelor, acted in 1693—a play inferior, indeed, to his other comedies, but, in its own line, inferior to them alone. The plot is equally destitute of interest and of probability. The characters are either not distinguishable, or are distinguished only by peculiarities of the most glaring kind. But the dialogue is resplendent with wit and eloquence—which, indeed, are so abundant that the fool comes in for an ample share—and yet preserves a certain colloquial air, a certain indescribable ease, of which Wycherley had given no example, and which Sheridan in vain attempted to imitate. The author, divided between pride and shame—pride at having written a good play, and shame at having done an ungentlemanlike thing—pretended that he had merely scribbled a few scenes for his own amusement, and affected to yield unwillingly to the importunities of those who pressed him to try his fortune on the stage. The Old Bachelor was seen in manuscript by Dryden, one of whose best qualities was a hearty and generous admiration for the talents of others. He declared that he had never read such a first play, and lent his services to bring it into a form fit for representation. Nothing was wanting to the

success of the piece. It was so cast as to bring into play all the comic talent, and to exhibit on the boards in one view all the beauty which Drury Lane Theatre, then the only theatre in London, could assemble. The result was a complete triumph ; and the author was gratified with rewards more substantial than the applauses of the pit. Montagu, then a lord of the Treasury, immediately gave him a place, and in a short time added the reversion of another place of much greater value, which, however, did not become vacant till many years had elapsed.

In 1694, Congreve brought out the Double Dealer, a comedy in which all the powers which had produced the Old Bachelor showed themselves matured by time and improved by exercise. But the audience was shocked by the characters of Maskwell and Lady Touchwood. And, indeed, there is something strangely revolting in the way in which a group that seems to belong to the House of Laius or of Pelops is introduced into the midst of the Brisks, Froths, Carelesses, and Plyants. The play was unfavorably received. Yet, if the praise of distinguished men could compensate an author for the disapprobation of the multitude, Congreve had no reason to repine. Dryden, in one of the most ingenious, magnificent, and pathetic pieces that he ever wrote, extolled the author of the Double Dealer in terms which now appear extravagantly hyperbolical. Till Congreve came forth—so ran this exquisite flattery —the superiority of the poets who preceded the civil wars was acknowledged :

> " Theirs was the giant race before the flood."

Since the return of the royal house, much art and

ability had been exerted, but the old masters had been still unrivalled :

> " Our builders were with want of genius curst.
> The second temple was not like the first."

At length a writer had arisen who, just emerging from boyhood, had surpassed the authors of the Knight of the Burning Pestle and of the Silent Woman, and who had only one rival left to contend with :

> " Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
> To Shakspeare gave as much, she could not give him more."

Some lines near the end of the poem are singularly graceful and touching, and sank deep into the heart of Congreve :

> " Already am I worn with cares and age,
> And just abandoning the ungrateful stage ;
> But you, whom every Muse and Grace adorn,
> Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
> Be kind to my remains ; and, oh, defend
> Against your judgment your departed friend.
> Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
> But guard those laurels which descend to you."

The crowd, as usual, gradually came over to the opinion of the men of note ; and the Double Dealer was before long quite as much admired, though perhaps never so much liked, as the Old Bachelor.

In 1695 appeared Love for Love, superior both in wit and in scenic effect to either of the preceding plays. It was peformed at a new theatre which Betterton and some other actors, disgusted by the treatment which they had received in Drury Lane, had just opened in a tennis-court near Lincoln's Inn. Scarcely any comedy

within the memory of the oldest man had been equally successful. The actors were so elated that they gave Congreve a share in their theatre ; and he promised in return to furnish them with a play every year, if his health would permit. Two years passed, however, before he produced the Mourning Bride, a play which, paltry as it is when compared, we do not say with Lear or Macbeth, but with the best dramas of Massinger and Ford, stands very high among the tragedies of the age in which it was written. To find anything so good we must go twelve years back to Venice Preserved, or six years forward to the Fair Penitent. The noble passage which Johnson, both in writing and in conversation, extolled above any other in the English drama has suffered greatly in the public estimation from the extravagance of his praise. Had he contented himself with saying that it was finer than anything in the tragedies of Dryden, Otway, Lee, Rowe, Southern, Hughes, and Addison—than anything, in short, that had been written for the stage since the days of Charles the First—he would not have been in the wrong.

The success of the Mourning Bride was even greater than that of Love for Love. Congreve was now allowed to be the first tragic as well as the first comic dramatist of his time ; and all this at twenty-seven. We believe that no English writer except Lord Byron has, at so early an age, stood so high in the estimation of his contemporaries.

At this time took place an event which deserves, in our opinion, a very different sort of notice from that which has been bestowed on it by Mr. Leigh Hunt. The nation had now nearly recovered from the demoralizing effect of the Puritan austerity. The gloomy

follies of the reign of the Saints were but faintly remembered. The evils produced by profaneness and debauchery were recent and glaring. The court, since the Revolution, had ceased to patronize licentiousness. Mary was strictly pious; and the vices of the cold, stern, and silent William were not obtruded on the public eye. Discountenanced by the government, and falling in the favor of the people, the profligacy of the Restoration still maintained its ground in some parts of society. Its strongholds were the places where men of wit and fashion congregated, and, above all, the theatres. At this conjuncture arose a great reformer whom, widely as we differ from him in many important points, we can never mention without respect.

Jeremy Collier was a clergyman of the Church of England, bred at Cambridge. His talents and attainments were such as might have been expected to raise him to the highest honors of his profession. He had an extensive knowledge of books; yet he had mingled much with polite society, and is said not to have wanted either grace or vivacity in conversation. There were few branches of literature to which he had not paid some attention. But ecclesiastical antiquity was his favorite study. In religious opinions he belonged to that section of the Church of England which lies furthest from Geneva and nearest to Rome. His notions touching Episcopal government, holy orders, the efficacy of the sacraments, the authority of the Fathers, the guilt of schism, the importance of vestments, ceremonies, and solemn days, differed little from those which are now held by Dr. Pusey and Mr. Newman. Towards the close of his life, indeed, Collier took some steps which brought him still nearer to Popery—mixed

water with the wine in the eucharist, made the sign of the cross in confirmation, employed oil in the visitation of the sick, and offered up prayers for the dead. His politics were of a piece with his divinity. He was a Tory of the highest sort, such as in the cant of his age was called a Tantivy. Not even the persecution of the bishops and the spoliation of the universities could shake his steady loyalty. While the Convention was sitting, he wrote with vehemence in defence of the fugitive king, and was in consequence arrested. But his dauntless spirit was not to be so tamed. He refused to take the oaths, renounced all his preferments, and, in a succession of pamphlets written with much violence and with some ability, attempted to excite the nation against its new masters. In 1692 he was again arrested on suspicion of having been concerned in a treasonable plot. So unbending were his principles that his friends could hardly persuade him to let them bail him ; and he afterwards expressed his remorse for having been induced thus to acknowledge, by implication, the authority of a usurping government. He was soon in trouble again. Sir John Friend and Sir William Parkins were tried and convicted of high-treason for planning the murder of King William. Collier administered spiritual consolation to them, attended them to Tyburn, and, just before they were turned off, laid his hands on their heads, and, by the authority which he derived from Christ, solemnly absolved them. This scene gave indescribable scandal. Tories joined with Whigs in blaming the conduct of the daring priest. Some acts, it was said, which fall under the definition of treason are such that a good man may, in troubled times, be led into them even by his virtues.

It may be necessary for the protection of society to punish such a man. But even in punishing him we consider him as legally rather than morally guilty, and hope that his honest error, though it cannot be pardoned here, will not be counted to him for sin hereafter. But such was not the case with Collier's penitents. They were concerned in a plot for waylaying and butchering in an hour of security one who, whether he were or were not their king, was at all events their fellow-creature. Whether the Jacobite theory about the rights of governments and the duties of subjects were or were not well founded, assassination must always be considered as a great crime. It is condemned even by the maxims of worldly honor and morality. Much more must it be an object of abhorrence to the pure Spouse of Christ. The Church cannot surely, without the saddest and most mournful forebodings, see one of her children who has been guilty of this great wickedness pass into eternity without any sign of repentance. That these traitors had given any sign of repentance was not alleged. It might be that they had privately declared their contrition ; and, if so, the minister of religion might be justified in privately assuring them of the divine forgiveness. But a public remission ought to have been preceded by a public atonement. The regret of these men, if expressed at all, had been expressed in secret. The hands of Collier had been laid on them in the presence of thousands. The inference which his enemies drew from his conduct was that he did not consider the conspiracy against the life of William as sinful. But this inference he very vehemently, and, we doubt not, very sincerely, denied.

The storm raged. The bishops put forth a solemn censure of the absolution. The Attorney-general brought the matter before the Court of King's Bench. Collier had now made up his mind not to give bail for his appearance before any court which derived its authority from the usurper. He accordingly absconded and was outlawed. He survived these events about thirty years. The prosecution was not pressed ; and he was soon suffered to resume his literary pursuits in quiet. At a later period, many attempts were made to shake his perverse integrity by offers of wealth and dignity, but in vain. When he died, towards the end of the reign of George the First, he was still under the ban of the law.

We shall not be suspected of regarding either the politics or the theology of Collier with partiality ; but we believe him to have been as honest and courageous a man as ever lived. We will go further, and say that, though passionate and often wrongheaded, he was a singularly fair controversialist, candid, generous, too high-spirited to take mean advantages even in the most exciting disputes, and pure from all taint of personal malevolence. It must also be admitted that his opinions on ecclesiastical and political affairs, though in themselves absurd and pernicious, eminently qualified him to be the reformer of our lighter literature. The libertinism of the press and of the stage was, as we have said, the effect of a reaction against the Puritan strictness. Profligacy was, like the oak-leaf on the twenty-ninth of May, the badge of a Cavalier and a High-Churchman. Decency was associated with conventicles and calves' heads. Grave prelates were too much disposed to wink at the excesses of a body of

zealous and able allies who covered Roundheads and Presbyterians with ridicule. If a Whig raised his voice against the impiety and licentiousness of the fashionable writers, his mouth was instantly stopped by the retort, You are one of those who groan at a light quotation from Scripture and raise estates out of the plunder of the Church, who shudder at a *double-entendre* and chop off the heads of kings. A Baxter, a Burnet, even a Tillotson, would have done little to purify our literature. But when a man fanatical in the cause of episcopacy, and actually under outlawry for his attachment to hereditary right, came forward as the champion of decency, the battle was already half won.

In 1698, Collier published his Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage, a book which threw the whole literary world into commotion, but which is now much less read than it deserves. The faults of the work, indeed, are neither few nor small. The dissertations on the Greek and Latin drama do not at all help the argument, and, whatever may have been thought of them by the generation which fancied that Christ Church had refuted Bentley, are such as, in the present day, a scholar of very humble pretensions may venture to pronounce boyish, or rather babyish. The censures are not sufficiently discriminating. The authors whom Collier accused had been guilty of such gross sins against decency that he was certain to weaken instead of strengthening his case by introducing into his charge against them any matter about which there could be the smallest dispute. He was, however, so injudicious as to place among the outrageous offences which he justly arraigned some things which are really quite innocent, and some slight instances of levity

which, though not perhaps strictly correct, could easily be paralleled from the works of writers who had rendered great services to morality and religion. Thus he blames Congreve, the number and gravity of whose real transgressions made it quite unnecessary to tax him with any that were not real, for using the words "martyr" and "inspiration" in a light sense; as if an archbishop might not say that a speech was inspired by claret, or that an alderman was a martyr to the gout. Sometimes, again, Collier does not sufficiently distinguish between the dramatist and the persons of the drama. Thus he blames Vanbrugh for putting into Lord Foppington's mouth some contemptuous expressions respecting the Church service; though it is obvious that Vanbrugh could not better express reverence than by making Lord Foppington express contempt. There is also throughout the Short View too strong a display of professional feeling. Collier is not content with claiming for his order an immunity from indiscriminate scurrility; he will not allow that, in any case, any word or act of a divine can be a proper subject for ridicule. Nor does he confine this benefit of clergy to the ministers of the Established Church. He extends the privilege to Catholic priests, and, what in him is more surprising, to Dissenting preachers. This, however, is a mere trifle. Imaums, Brahmins, priests of Jupiter, priests of Baal, are all to be held sacred. Dryden is blamed for making the Mufti, in Don Sebastian, talk nonsense. Lee is called to a severe account for his incivility to Tiresias. But the most curious passage is that in which Collier resents some uncivil reflections thrown by Cassandra, in Dryden's Cleomenes, on the calf Apis and his hierophants. The

words "grass-eating, foddered god"—words which really are much in the style of several passages in the Old Testament—give as much offence to this Christian divine as they could have given to the priests of Memphis.

But when all deductions have been made, great merit must be allowed to this work. There is hardly any book of that time from which it would be possible to select specimens of writing so excellent and so various. To compare Collier with Pascal would, indeed, be absurd. Yet we hardly know where, except in the Provincial Letters, we can find mirth so harmoniously and becomingly blended with solemnity as in the Short View. In truth, all the modes of ridicule, from broad fun to polished and antithetical sarcasm, were at Collier's command. On the other hand, he was complete master of the rhetoric of honest indignation. We scarcely know any volume which contains so many bursts of that peculiar eloquence which comes from the heart and goes to the heart. Indeed, the spirit of the book is truly heroic. In order fairly to appreciate it, we must remember the situation in which the writer stood. He was under the frown of power. His name was already a mark for the invectives of one half of the writers of the age, when, in the cause of good taste, good sense, and good morals, he gave battle to the other half. Strong as his political prejudices were, he seems on this occasion to have entirely laid them aside. He has forgotten that he is a Jacobite, and remembers only that he is a citizen and a Christian. Some of his sharpest censures are directed against poetry which had been hailed with delight by the Tory party and had inflicted a deep wound on the Whigs.

It is inspiriting to see how gallantly the solitary outlaw advances to attack enemies formidable separately and, it might have been thought, irresistible when combined, distributes his swashing blows right and left among Wycherley, Congreve, and Vanbrugh, treads the wretched D'Urfey down in the dirt beneath his feet, and strikes with all his strength full at the towering crest of Dryden.

The effect produced by the Short View was immense The nation was on the side of Collier. But it could not be doubted that, in the great host which he had defied, some champion would be found to lift the gauntlet. The general belief was that Dryden would take the field; and all the wits anticipated a sharp contest between two well-paired combatants. The great poet had been singled out in the most marked manner. It was well known that he was deeply hurt, that much smaller provocations had formerly roused him to violent resentment, and that there was no literary weapon, offensive or defensive, of which he was not master. But his conscience smote him; he stood abashed, like the fallen archangel at the rebuke of Zephon—

> "And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
> Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw and pined
> His loss."

At a later period he mentioned the Short View in the preface to his Fables. He complained, with some asperity, of the harshness with which he had been treated, and urged some matters in mitigation. But, on the whole, he frankly acknowledged that he had been justly reproved. "If," said he, "Mr. Collier be my enemy,

let him triumph. If he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance."

It would have been wise in Congreve to follow his master's example. He was precisely in that situation in which it is madness to attempt a vindication ; for his guilt was so clear that no address or eloquence could obtain an acquittal. On the other hand, there were in his case many extenuating circumstances, which, if he had acknowledged his error and promised amendment, would have procured his pardon. The most rigid censor could not but make great allowances for the faults into which so young a man had been seduced by evil example, by the luxuriance of a vigorous fancy, and by the inebriating effect of popular applause. The esteem as well as the admiration of the public was still within his reach. He might easily have effaced all memory of his transgressions, and have shared with Addison the glory of showing that the most brilliant wit may be the ally of virtue. But, in any case, prudence should have restrained him from encountering Collier. The Nonjuror was a man thoroughly fitted, by nature, education, and habit, for polemical dispute. Congreve's mind, though a mind of no common fertility and vigor, was of a different class. No man understood so well the art of polishing epigrams and repartees into the clearest effulgence, and setting them neatly in easy and familiar dialogue. In this sort of jewelry he attained to a mastery unprecedented and inimitable. But he was altogether rude in the art of controversy, and he had a cause to defend which scarcely any art could have rendered victorious.

The event was such as might have been foreseen.

Congreve's answer was a complete failure. He was angry, obscure, and dull. Even the Green Room and Will's Coffee-house were compelled to acknowledge that in wit, as well as in argument, the parson had a decided advantage over the poet. Not only was Congreve unable to make any show of a case where he was in the wrong, but he succeeded in putting himself completely in the wrong where he was in the right. Collier had taxed him with profaneness for calling a clergyman Mr. Prig, and for introducing a coachman named Jehu, in allusion to the King of Israel, who was known at a distance by his furious driving. Had there been nothing worse in the Old Bachelor and Double Dealer, Congreve might pass for as pure a writer as Cowper himself, who, in poems revised by so austere a censor as John Newton, calls a fox-hunting squire Nimrod, and gives to a chaplain the disrespectful name of Smug. Congreve might with good effect have appealed to the public whether it might not be fairly presumed that, when such frivolous charges were made, there were no very serious charges to make. Instead of doing this, he pretended that he meant no allusion to the Bible by the name of Jehu, and no reflection by the name of Prig. Strange that a man of such parts should, in order to defend himself against imputations which nobody could regard as important, tell untruths which it was certain that nobody would believe !

One of the pleas that Congreve set up for himself and his brethren was that, though they might be guilty of a little levity here and there, they were careful to inculcate a moral, packed close into two or three lines, at the end of every play. Had the fact been as he stated it, the defence would be worth very little. For no man

acquainted with human nature could think that a sententious couplet would undo all the mischief that five profligate acts had done. But it would have been wise in Congreve to have looked again at his own comedies before he used this argument. Collier did so, and found that the moral of the Old Bachelor, the grave apothegm which is to be a set-off against all the libertinism of the piece, is contained in the following triplet:

> " What rugged ways attend the noon of life !
> Our sun declines, and with what anxious strife,
> What pain, we tug that galling load—a wife ! "

" Love for Love," says Collier, " may have a somewhat better farewell, but it would do a man little service should he remember it to his dying day :

> " ' The miracle to-day is, that we find
> A lover true, not that a woman 's kind.' "

Collier's reply was severe and triumphant. One of his repartees we will quote, not as a favorable specimen of his manner, but because it was called forth by Congreve's characteristic affectation. The poet spoke of the Old Bachelor as a trifle to which he attached no value, and which had become public by a sort of accident. " I wrote it," he said, " to amuse myself in a slow recovery from a fit of sickness."—" What his disease was," replied Collier, " I am not to inquire ; but it must be a very ill one to be worse than the remedy."

All that Congreve gained by coming forward on this occasion was that he completely deprived himself of the excuse which he might with justice have pleaded

for his early offences. "Why," asked Collier, "should the man laugh at the mischief of the boy, and make the disorders of his nonage his own by an after-approbation?"

Congreve was not Collier's only opponent. Vanbrugh, Dennis, and Settle took the field. And, from a passage in a contemporary satire, we are inclined to think that among the answers to the Short View was one written, or supposed to be written, by Wycherley. The victory remained with Collier. A great and rapid reform in almost all the departments of our lighter literature was the effect of his labors. A new race of wits and poets arose, who generally treated with reverence the great ties which bind society together, and whose very indecencies were decent when compared with those of the school which flourished during the last forty years of the seventeenth century.

This controversy probably prevented Congreve from fulfilling the engagements into which he had entered with the actors. It was not till 1700 that he produced the Way of the World, the most deeply meditated and the most brilliantly written of all his works. It wants, perhaps, the constant movement, the effervescence of animal spirits, which we find in Love for Love. But the hysterical rants of Lady Wishfort, the meeting of Witwould and his brother, the country knight's courtship and his subsequent revel, and, above all, the chase and surrender of Millamant are superior to anything that is to be found in the whole range of English comedy from the Civil War downwards. It is quite inexplicable to us that this play should have failed on the stage. Yet so it was; and the author, already sore with the wounds which Collier had inflicted, was

Jeremy Collier A.M.

galled past endurance by this new stroke. He resolved never again to expose himself to the rudeness of a tasteless audience, and took leave of the theatre forever.

He lived twenty-eight years longer, without adding to the high literary reputation which he had attained. He read much while he retained his eyesight, and now and then wrote a short essay, or put an idle tale into verse ; but he appears never to have planned any considerable work. The miscellaneous pieces which he published in 1710 are of little value, and have long been forgotten.

The stock of fame which he had acquired by his comedies was sufficient, assisted by the graces of his manner and conversation, to secure for him a high place in the estimation of the world. During the winter he lived among the most distinguished and agreeable people in London. His summers were passed at the splendid country-seats of ministers and peers. Literary envy and political faction, which in that age respected nothing else, respected his repose. He professed to be one of the party of which his patron Montagu, now Lord Halifax, was the head. But he had civil words and small good offices for men of every shade of opinion. And men of every shade of opinion spoke well of him in return.

His means were for a long time scanty. The place which he had in possession barely enabled him to live with comfort. And when the Tories came into power, some thought that he would lose even the moderate provision. But Harley, who was by no means disposed to adopt the exterminating policy of the October Club, and who, with all his faults of understanding and

temper, had a sincere kindness for men of genius, reassured the anxious poet by quoting very gracefully and happily the lines of Virgil,

> "Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora Pœni,
> Nec tam aversus equos Tyria Sol jungit ab urbe."

The indulgence with which Congreve was treated by the Tories was not purchased by any concession on his part which could justly offend the Whigs. It was his rare good-fortune to share the triumph of his friends without having shared their proscription. When the House of Hanover came to the throne, he partook largely of the prosperity of those with whom he was connected. The reversion to which he had been nominated twenty years before fell in. He was made Secretary to the Island of Jamaica ; and his whole income amounted to twelve hundred a year, a fortune which, for a single man, was in that age not only easy, but splendid. He continued, however, to practise the frugality which he had learned when he could scarce spare, as Swift tells us, a shilling to pay the chairmen who carried him to Lord Halifax's. Though he had nobody to save for, he laid up at least as much as he spent.

The infirmities of age came early upon him. His habits had been intemperate ; he suffered much from gout ; and, when confined to his chamber, he had no longer the solace of literature. Blindness, the most cruel misfortune that can befall the lonely student, made his books useless to him. He was thrown on society for all his amusement ; and in society his good-breeding and vivacity made him always welcome.

By the rising men of letters he was considered not as

a rival, but as a classic. He had left their arena ; he never measured his strength with them ; and he was always loud in applause of their exertions. They could, therefore, entertain no jealousy of him, and thought no more of detracting from his fame than of carping at the great men who had been lying a hundred years in Poets' Corner. Even the inmates of Grub Street, even the heroes of the Dunciad, were for once just to living merit. There can be no stronger illustration of the estimation in which Congreve was held than the fact that the English Iliad, a work which appeared with more splendid auspices than any other in our language, was dedicated to him. There was not a duke in the kingdom who would not have been proud of such a compliment. Dr. Johnson expresses great admiration for the independence of spirit which Pope showed on this occasion. " He passed over peers and statesmen to inscribe his Iliad to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praise had been complete had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was chosen for so great an honor, it is not now possible to know." It is certainly impossible to know ; yet, we think, it is possible to guess. The translation of the Iliad had been zealously befriended by men of all political opinions. The poet who, at an early age, had been raised to affluence by the emulous liberality of Whigs and Tories could not with propriety inscribe to a chief of either party a work which had been munificently patronized by both. It was necessary to find some person who was at once eminent and neutral. It was therefore necessary to pass over peers and statesmen. Congreve had a high name in letters. He had a high name in aristocratic circles. He lived on terms

of civility with men of all parties. By a courtesy paid to him, neither the ministers nor the leaders of the Opposition could be offended.

The singular affectation which had from the first been characteristic of Congreve grew stronger and stronger as he advanced in life. At last it became disagreeable to him to hear his own comedies praised. Voltaire, whose soul was burned up by the raging desire for literary renown, was half puzzled and half disgusted by what he saw, during his visit to England, of this extraordinary whim. Congreve disclaimed the character of a poet, declared that his plays were trifles produced in an idle hour, and begged that Voltaire would consider him merely as a gentleman. "If you had been merely a gentleman," said Voltaire, "I should not have come to see you."

Congreve was not a man of warm affections. Domestic ties he had none; and in the temporary connection which he formed with a succession of beauties from the green-room his heart does not appear to have been interested. Of all his attachments, that to Mrs. Bracegirdle lasted the longest and was the most celebrated. That charming actress, who was during many years the idol of all London, whose face caused the fatal broil in which Mountfort fell and for which Lord Mohun was tried by the Peers, and to whom the Earl of Scarsdale was said to have made honorable addresses, had conducted herself, in very trying circumstances, with extraordinary discretion. Congreve at length became her confidential friend. They constantly rode out together and dined together. Some people said that she was his mistress, and others that she would soon be his wife. He was at last drawn away from her

by the influence of a wealthier and haughtier beauty. Henrietta, daughter of the great Marlborough, and Countess of Godolphin, had, on her father's death, succeeded to his dukedom, and to the greater part of his immense property. Her husband was an insignificant man, of whom Lord Chesterfield said that he came to the House of Peers only to sleep, and that he might as well sleep on the right as on the left of the woolsack. Between the Duchess and Congreve sprang up a most eccentric friendship. He had a seat every day at her table, and assisted in the direction of her concerts. That malignant old beldame, the Dowager Duchess Sarah, who had quarrelled with her daughter as she had quarrelled with everybody else, affected to suspect that there was something wrong. But the world in general appears to have thought that a great lady might, without any imputation on her character, pay marked attention to a man of eminent genius who was near sixty years old, who was still older in appearance and in constitution, who was confined to his chair by gout, and who was unable to read from blindness.

In the summer of 1728, Congreve was ordered to try the Bath waters. During his excursion he was overturned in his chariot, and received some severe internal injury from which he never recovered. He came back to London in a dangerous state, complained constantly of a pain in his side, and continued to sink, till in the following January he expired.

He left ten thousand pounds, saved out of the emoluments of his lucrative places. Johnson says that this money ought to have gone to the Congreve family, which was then in great distress. Dr. Young and Mr.

Leigh Hunt, two gentlemen who seldom agree with each other, but with whom, on this occasion, we are happy to agree, think that it ought to have gone to Mrs. Bracegirdle. Congreve bequeathed two hundred pounds to Mrs. Bracegirdle, and an equal sum to a certain Mrs. Jellat ; but the bulk of his accumulations went to the Duchess of Marlborough, in whose immense wealth such a legacy was as a drop in the bucket. It might have raised the fallen fortunes of a Staffordshire squire ; it might have enabled a retired actress to enjoy every comfort, and, in her sense, every luxury ; but it was hardly sufficient to defray the Duchess's establishment for three months.

The great lady buried her friend with a pomp seldom seen at the funerals of poets. The corpse lay in state under the ancient roof of the Jerusalem Chamber, and was interred in Westminster Abbey. The pall was borne by the Duke of Bridgewater, Lord Cobham, the Earl of Wilmington (who had been Speaker, and was afterwards First Lord of the Treasury), and other men of high consideration. Her Grace laid out her friend's bequest in a superb diamond necklace, which she wore in honor of him, and, if report is to be believed, showed her regard in ways much more extraordinary. It is said that a statue of him in ivory, which moved by clockwork, was placed daily at her table ; that she had a wax doll made in imitation of him, and that the feet of the doll were regularly blistered and anointed by the doctors, as poor Congreve's feet had been when he suffered from the gout. A monument was erected to the poet in Westminster Abbey, with an inscription written by the Duchess ; and Lord Cobham honored him with a cenotaph, which seems to us, though that

is a bold word, the ugliest and most absurd of the buildings at Stowe.

We have said that Wycherley was a worse Congreve. There was, indeed, a remarkable analogy between the writings and lives of these two men. Both were gentlemen liberally educated. Both led town lives, and knew human nature only as it appears between Hyde Park and the Tower. Both were men of wit. Neither had much imagination. Both at an early age produced lively and profligate comedies. Both retired from the field while still in early manhood, and owed to their youthful achievements in literature whatever consideration they enjoyed in later life. Both, after they had ceased to write for the stage, published volumes of miscellanies which did little credit either to their talents or to their morals. Both, during their declining years, hung loose upon society; and both, in their last moments, made eccentric and unjustifiable dispositions of their estates.

But in every point Congreve maintained his superiority to Wycherley. Wycherley had wit ; but the wit of Congreve far outshines that of every comic writer, except Sheridan, who has arisen within the last two centuries. Congreve had not, in a large measure, the poetical faculty ; but compared with Wycherley he might be called a great poet. Wycherley had some knowledge of books ; but Congreve was a man of real learning. Congreve's offences against decorum, though highly culpable, were not so gross as those of Wycherley ; nor did Congreve, like Wycherley, exhibit to the world the deplorable spectacle of a licentious dotage. Congreve died in the enjoyment of high consideration ; Wycherley, forgotten or despised. Congreve's will

was absurd and capricious; but Wycherley's last actions appear to have been prompted by obdurate malignity.

Here, at least for the present, we must stop. Vanbrugh and Farquhar are not men to be hastily dismissed, and we have not left ourselves space to do them justice.

LORD HOLLAND. (JULY, 1841.)

The Opinions of Lord Holland as Recorded in the Journals of the House of Lords from 1797 to 1841. Collected and edited by D. C. MOYLAN, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-Law. 8vo. London: 1841.

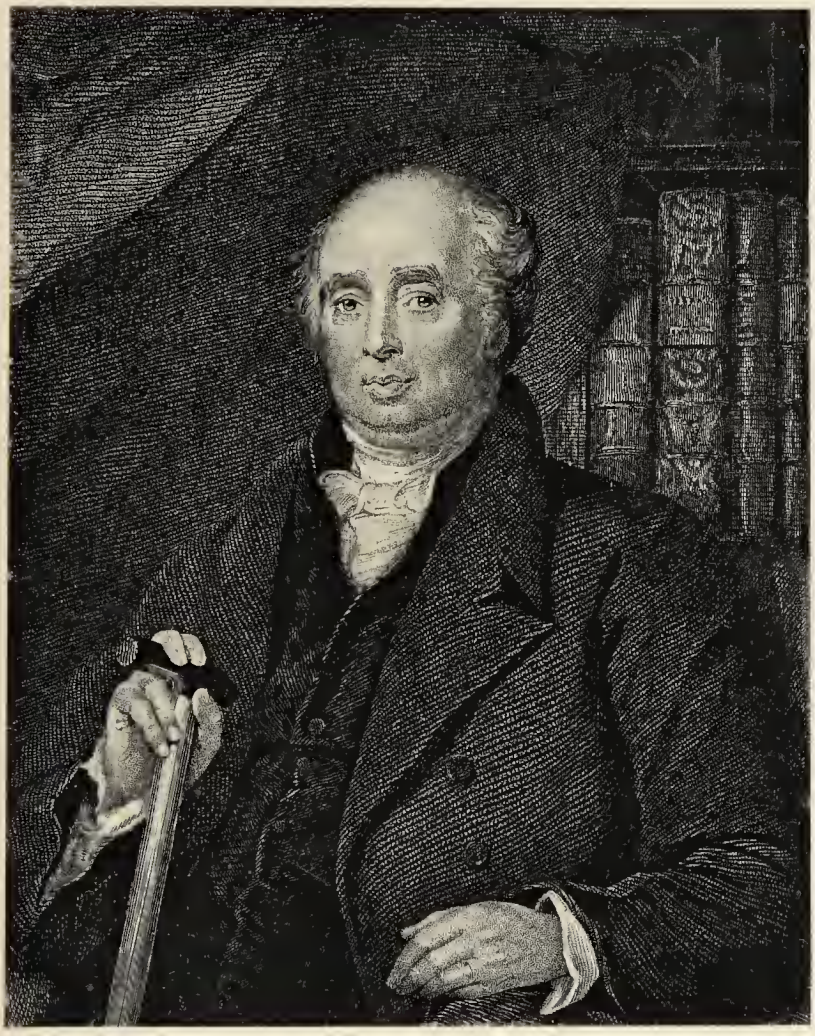
MANY reasons make it impossible for us to lay before our readers, at the present moment, a complete view of the character and public career of the late Lord Holland. But we feel that we have already deferred too long the duty of paying some tribute to his memory. We feel that it is more becoming to bring without further delay an offering, though intrinsically of little value, than to leave his tomb longer without some token of our reverence and love.

We shall say very little of the book which lies on our table. And yet it is a book which, even if it had been the work of a less distinguished man, or had appeared under circumstances less interesting, would have well repaid an attentive perusal. It is valuable both as a record of principles and as a model of composition. We find in it all the great maxims which, during more than forty years, guided Lord Holland's public conduct, and the chief reasons on which those maxims rest, condensed into the smallest possible space, and set forth with admirable perspicuity, dignity, and pre-

cision. To his opinions on foreign policy we for the most part cordially assent ; but now and then we are inclined to think them imprudently generous. We could not have signed the protest against the detention of Napoleon. The protest respecting the course which England pursued at the Congress of Verona, though it contains much that is excellent, contains also positions which, we are inclined to think, Lord Holland would at a later period have admitted to be unsound. But to all his doctrines on constitutional questions we give our hearty approbation ; and we firmly believe that no British government has ever deviated from that line of internal policy which he has traced, without detriment to the public.

We will give, as a specimen of this little volume, a single passage, in which a chief article of the political creed of the Whigs is stated and explained with singular clearness, force, and brevity. Our readers will remember that in 1825 the Catholic Association raised the cry of emancipation with most formidable effect. The Tories acted after their kind. Instead of removing the grievance, they tried to put down the agitation, and brought in a law, apparently sharp and stringent, but in truth utterly impotent, for restraining the right of petition. Lord Holland's protest on that occasion is excellent :

"We are," says he, "well aware that the privileges of the people, the rights of free discussion, and the spirit and letter of our popular institutions must render—and they are intended to render—the continuance of an extensive grievance, and of the dissatisfaction consequent thereupon, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and ultimately subversive of the authority of the State. Experience and theory alike forbid us to deny



that effect of a free constitution; a sense of justice and a love of liberty equally deter us from lamenting it. But we have always been taught to look for the remedy of such disorders in the redress of the grievances which justify them, and in the removal of the dissatisfaction from which they flow—not in restraints on ancient privileges, not in inroads on the right of public discussion, nor in violations of the principles of a free government. If, therefore, the legal method of seeking redress, which has been resorted to by persons laboring under grievous disabilities, be fraught with immediate or remote danger to the State, we draw from that circumstance a conclusion long since foretold by great authority—namely, that the British Constitution and large exclusions cannot subsist together; that the Constitution must destroy them, or they will destroy the Constitution."

It was not, however, of this little book, valuable and interesting as it is, but of the author, that we meant to speak; and we will try to do so with calmness and impartiality.

In order to fully appreciate the character of Lord Holland, it is necessary to go far back into the history of his family; for he had inherited something more than a coronet and an estate. To the house of which he was the head belongs one distinction which we believe to be without a parallel in our annals. During more than a century, there has never been a time at which a Fox has not stood in a prominent station among public men. Scarcely had the checkered career of the first Lord Holland closed, when his son Charles rose to the head of the Opposition and to the first rank among English debaters. And before Charles was borne to Westminster Abbey a third Fox had already become one of the most conspicuous politicians in the kingdom.

It is impossible not to be struck by the strong family likeness which, in spite of diversities arising from education and position, appears in these three distinguished persons. In their faces and figures there was a resemblance such as is common enough in novels, where one picture is good for ten generations, but such as in real life is seldom found. The ample person, the massy and thoughtful forehead, the large eyebrows, the full cheek and lip, the expression, so singularly compounded of sense, humor, courage, openness, a strong will and a sweet temper, were common to all. But the features of the founder of the house, as the pencil of Reynolds and the chisel of Nollekens have handed them down to us, were disagreeably harsh and exaggerated. In his descendants the aspect was preserved, but it was softened, till it became, in the late lord, the most gracious and interesting countenance that was ever lighted up by the mingled lustre of intelligence and benevolence.

As it was with the faces of the men of this noble family, so was it also with their minds. Nature had done much for them all. She had moulded them all of that clay of which she is most sparing. To all she had given strong reason and sharp wit ; a quick relish for every physical and intellectual enjoyment ; constitutional intrepidity, and that frankness by which constitutional intrepidity is generally accompanied ; spirits which nothing could depress ; tempers easy, generous, and placable ; and that genial courtesy which has its seat in the heart, and of which artificial politeness is only a faint and cold imitation. Such a disposition is the richest inheritance that ever was entailed on any family.

But training and situation greatly modified the fine

qualities which nature lavished with such profusion on three generations of the House of Fox. The first Lord Holland was a needy political adventurer. He entered public life at a time when the standard of integrity among statesmen was low. He started as the adherent of a minister who had indeed many titles to respect, who possessed eminent talents both for administration and for debate, who understood the public interest well, and who meant fairly by the country, but who had seen so much perfidy and meanness that he had become sceptical as to the existence of probity. Weary of the cant of patriotism, Walpole had learned to talk a cant of a different kind. Disgusted by that sort of hypocrisy which is at least a homage to virtue, he was too much in the habit of practising the less respectable hypocrisy which ostentatiously displays, and sometimes even simulates, vice. To Walpole Fox attached himself, politically and personally, with the ardor which belonged to his temperament. And it is not to be denied that in the school of Walpole he contracted faults which destroyed the value of his many great endowments. He raised himself, indeed, to the first consideration in the House of Commons ; he became a consummate master of the art of debate ; he attained honors and immense wealth ; but the public esteem and confidence were withheld from him. His private friends, indeed, justly extolled his generosity and good-nature. They maintained that in those parts of his conduct which they could least defend there was nothing sordid ; and that if he was misled, he was misled by amiable feelings, by a desire to serve his friends, and by anxious tenderness for his children. But by the nation he was regarded as a man of insatiable

rapacity and desperate ambition ; as a man ready to adopt, without scruple, the most immoral and the most unconstitutional manners ; as a man perfectly fitted, by all his opinions and feelings, for the work of managing the Parliament by means of secret-service money, and of keeping down the people with the bayonet. Many of his contemporaries had a morality quite as lax as his ; but very few among them had his talents, and none had his hardihood and energy. He could not, like Sandys and Dodington, find safety in contempt. He therefore became an object of such general aversion as no statesman since the fall of Strafford has incurred, of such general aversion as was probably never in any country incurred by a man of so kind and cordial a disposition. A weak mind would have sunk under such a load of unpopularity. But that resolute spirit seemed to derive new firmness from the public hatred. The only effect which reproaches appeared to produce on him was to sour, in some degree, his naturally sweet temper. The last acts of his public life were marked, not only by that audacity which he had derived from nature, not only by that immorality which he had learned in the school of Walpole, but by a harshness which almost amounted to cruelty, and which had never been supposed to belong to his character. His severity increased the unpopularity from which it had sprung. The well-known lampoon of Gray may serve as a specimen of the feeling of the country. All the images are taken from shipwrecks, quicksands, and cormorants. Lord Holland is represented as complaining that the cowardice of his accomplices had prevented him from putting down the free spirit of the city of London by sword and fire, and as

pining for a time when birds of prey should make their nests in Westminster Abbey, and unclean beasts burrow in St. Paul's.

Within a few months after the death of this remarkable man, his second son, Charles, appeared at the head of the party opposed to the American War. Charles had inherited the bodily and mental constitution of his father, and had been much, far too much, under his father's influence. It was indeed impossible that a son of so affectionate and noble a nature should not have been warmly attached to a parent who possessed many fine qualities, and who carried his indulgence and liberality towards his children even to a culpable extent. Charles saw that the person to whom he was bound by the strongest ties was in the highest degree odious to the nation ; and the effect was what might have been expected from the strong passions and constitutional boldness of so high-spirited a youth. He cast in his lot with his father, and took, while still a boy, a deep part in the most unjustifiable and unpopular measures that had been adopted since the reign of James the Second. In the debates on the Middlesex election, he distinguished himself, not only by his precocious powers of eloquence, but by the vehement and scornful manner in which he bade defiance to public opinion. He was at that time regarded as a man likely to be the most formidable champion of arbitrary government that had appeared since the Revolution—to be a Bute with far greater powers, a Mansfield with far greater courage. Happily his father's death liberated him early from the pernicious influence by which he had been misled. His mind expanded. His range of observation became wider. His genius broke through

early prejudices. His natural benevolence and magnanimity had fair play. In a very short time he appeared in a situation worthy of his understanding and of his heart. From a family whose name was associated in the public mind with tyranny and corruption, from a party of which the theory and the practice were equally servile, from the midst of the Luttrells, the Dysons, the Barringtons, came forth the greatest parliamentary defender of civil and religious liberty.

The late Lord Holland succeeded to the talents and to the fine natural dispositions of his house. But his situation was very different from that of the two eminent men of whom we have spoken. In some important respects it was better, in some it was worse, than theirs. He had one great advantage over them. He received a good political education. The first lord was educated by Sir Robert Walpole. Mr. Fox was educated by his father. The late lord was educated by Mr. Fox. The pernicious maxims early imbibed by the first Lord Holland made his great talents useless, and worse than useless, to the State. The pernicious maxims early imbibed by Mr. Fox led him, at the commencement of his public life, into great faults, which, though afterwards nobly expiated, were never forgotten. To the very end of his career, small men, when they had nothing else to say in defence of their own tyranny, bigotry, and imbecility, could always raise a cheer by some paltry taunt about the election of Colonel Luttrell, the imprisonment of the Lord Mayor, and other measures in which the great Whig leader had borne a part at the age of one or two and twenty. On Lord Holland no such slur could be thrown. Those who most dissent from his opinions must acknowledge that

a public life more consistent is not to be found in our annals. Every part of it is in perfect harmony with every other part ; and the whole is in perfect harmony with the great principles of toleration and civil freedom. This rare felicity is in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Mr. Fox. Lord Holland, as was natural in a person of his talents and expectations, began at a very early age to take the keenest interest in politics ; and Mr. Fox found the greatest pleasure in forming the mind of so hopeful a pupil. They corresponded largely on political subjects when the young lord was only sixteen ; and their friendship and mutual confidence continued to the day of that mournful separation at Chiswick. Under such training such a man as Lord Holland was in no danger of falling into those faults which threw a dark shade over the whole career of his grandfather, and from which the youth of his uncle was not wholly free.

On the other hand, the late Lord Holland, as compared with his grandfather and his uncle, labored under one great disadvantage. They were members of the House of Commons. He became a peer while still an infant. When he entered public life, the House of Lords was a very small and a very decorous assembly. The minority, to which he belonged, was scarcely able to muster five or six votes on the most important nights, when eighty or ninety lords were present. Debate had accordingly become a mere form, as it was in the Irish House of Peers before the Union. This was a great misfortune to a man like Lord Holland. It was not by occasionally addressing fifteen or twenty solemn and unfriendly auditors that his grandfather and his uncle attained their unrivalled parliamentary

skill. The former had learned his art in "the great Walpolean battles," on nights when Onslow was in the chair seventeen hours without intermission, when the thick ranks on both sides kept unbroken order till long after the winter sun had risen upon them, when the blind were led out by the hand into the lobby and the paralytic laid down in their bedclothes on the benches. The powers of Charles Fox were, from the first, exercised in conflicts not less exciting. The great talents of the late Lord Holland had no such advantage. This was the more unfortunate, because the peculiar species of eloquence which belonged to him in common with his family required much practice to develop it. With strong sense and the greatest readiness of wit, a certain tendency to hesitation was hereditary in the line of Fox. This hesitation arose, not from the poverty, but from the wealth, of their vocabulary. They paused, not from the difficulty of finding one expression, but from the difficulty of choosing between several. It was only by slow degrees and constant exercise that the first Lord Holland and his son overcame the defect. Indeed, neither of them overcame it completely.

In statement the late Lord Holland was not successful; his chief excellence lay in reply. He had the quick eye of his house for the unsound parts of an argument, and a great felicity in exposing them. He was decidedly more distinguished in debate than any peer of his time who had not sat in the House of Commons. Nay, to find his equal among persons similarly situated, we must go back eighty years to Earl Granville. For Mansfield, Thurlow, Loughborough, Grey, Grenville, Brougham, Plunket, and other eminent men, living and dead, whom we will not stop to enumerate,

carried to the Upper House an eloquence formed and matured in the Lower. The opinion of the most discerning judges was that Lord Holland's oratorical performances, though sometimes most successful, afforded no fair measure of his oratorical powers ; and that in an assembly of which the debates were frequent and animated, he would have attained a very high order of excellence. It was, indeed, impossible to listen to his conversation without seeing that he was a born debater. To him, as to his uncle, the exercise of the mind in discussion was a positive pleasure. With the greatest good-nature and good-breeding, he was the very opposite to an assenter. The word "disputatious" is generally used as a word of reproach ; but we can express our meaning only by saying that Lord Holland was most courteously and pleasantly disputatious. In truth, his quickness in discovering and apprehending distinctions and analogies was such as a veteran judge might envy. The lawyers of the Duchy of Lancaster were astonished to find in an unprofessional man so strong a relish for the esoteric parts of their science, and complained that as soon as they had split a hair, Lord Holland proceeded to split the filaments into filaments still finer. In a mind less happily constituted, there might have been a risk that this turn for subtlety would have produced serious evil. But in the heart and understanding of Lord Holland there was ample security against all such danger. He was not a man to be the dupe of his own ingenuity. He put his logic to its proper use ; and in him the dialectician was always subordinate to the statesman.

His political life is written in the chronicles of his country. Perhaps, as we have already intimated, his

opinions on two or three great questions of foreign policy were open to just objection. Yet even his errors, if he erred, were amiable and respectable. We are not sure that we do not love and admire him the more because he was now and then seduced from what we regard as a wise policy by sympathy with the oppressed, by generosity toward the fallen, by a philanthropy so enlarged that it took in all nations, by love of peace (a love which in him was second only to the love of freedom), and by the magnanimous credulity of a mind which was as incapable of suspecting as of devising mischief.

To his views on questions of domestic policy the voice of his countrymen does ample justice. They revere the memory of the man who was during forty years the constant protector of all oppressed races and persecuted sects, of the man whom neither the prejudices nor the interest belonging to his station could seduce from the path of right, of the noble who in every crisis cast in his lot with the commons, of the planter who made manful war on the slave-trade, of the landowner whose whole heart was in the struggle against the corn-laws.

We have hitherto touched almost exclusively on those parts of Lord Holland's character which were open to the observation of millions. How shall we express the feelings with which his memory is cherished by those who were honored with his friendship? Or in what language shall we speak of that house, once celebrated for its rare attractions to the farthest ends of the civilized world, and now silent and desolate as the grave? To that house, a hundred and twenty years ago, a poet addressed those tender and graceful

lines which have now acquired a new meaning not less sad than that which they originally bore :

> " Thou hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
> Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick's noble race,
> Why, once so loved, whene'er thy bower appears,
> O'er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears?
> How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
> Thy sloping walks and unpolluted air!
> How sweet the glooms beneath thine aged trees,
> Thy noontide shadow and thine evening breeze!
> His image thy forsaken bowers restore ;
> Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more ;
> No more the summer in thy glooms allayed,
> Thine evening breezes, and thy noonday shade."

Yet a few years, and the shades and structures may follow their illustrious masters. The wonderful city which, ancient and gigantic as it is, still continues to grow as fast as a young town of logwood by a water-privilege in Michigan, may soon displace those turrets and gardens which are associated with so much that is interesting and noble—with the courtly magnificence of Rich, with the loves of Ormond, with the counsels of Cromwell, with the death of Addison. The time is coming when, perhaps, a few old men, the last survivors of our generation, will in vain seek, amidst new streets and squares and railway-stations, for the site of that dwelling which was in their youth the favorite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of scholars, philosophers, and statesmen. They will then remember, with strange tenderness, many objects once familiar to them—the avenue and the terrace, the busts and the paintings, the carving, the grotesque gilding, and the enigmatical mottoes. With peculiar fondness

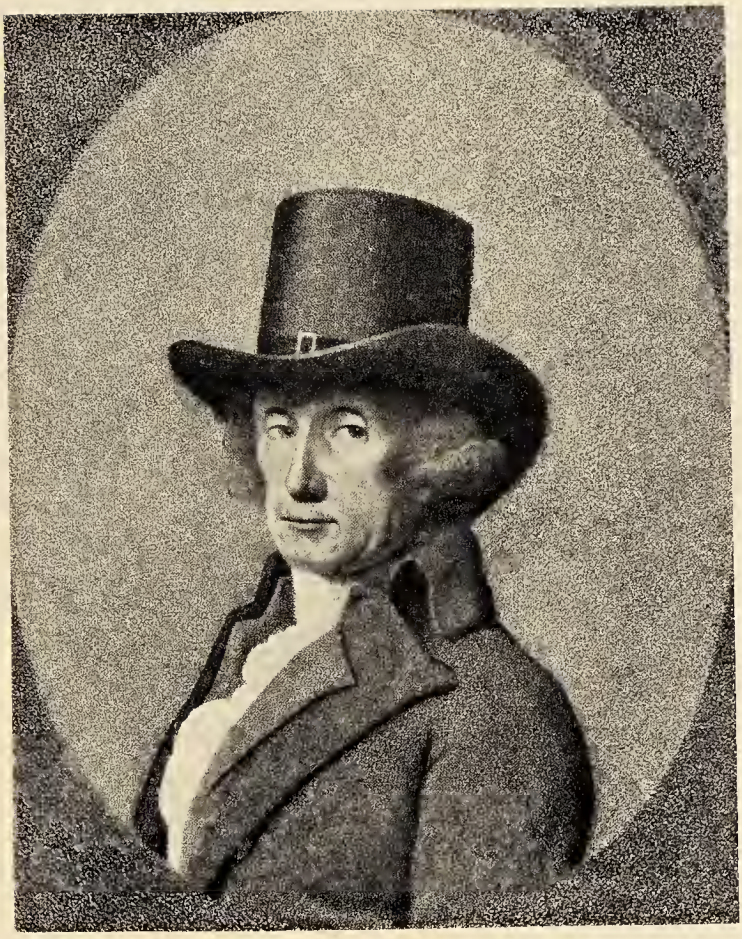
they will recall that venerable chamber in which all the antique gravity of a college library was so singularly blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room. They will recollect, not unmoved, those shelves loaded with the varied learning of many lands and many ages, and those portraits in which were preserved the features of the best and wisest Englishmen of two generations. They will recollect how many men who have guided the politics of Europe, who have moved great assemblies by reason and eloquence, who have put life into bronze and canvas, or who have left to posterity things so written as it shall not willingly let them die, were there mixed with all that was loveliest and gayest in the society of the most splendid of capitals. They will remember the peculiar character which belonged to that circle, in which every talent and accomplishment, every art and science, had its place. They will remember how the last debate was discussed in one corner and the last comedy of Scribe in another ; while Wilkie gazed with modest admiration on Sir Joshua's Baretti ; while Mackintosh turned over Thomas Aquinas to verify a quotation ; while Talleyrand related his conversations with Barras at the Luxembourg, or his ride with Lannes over the field of Austerlitz. They will remember, above all, the grace, and the kindness, far more admirable than grace, with which the princely hospitality of that ancient mansion was dispensed. They will remember the venerable and benignant countenance and the cordial voice of him who bade them welcome. They will remember that temper which years of pain, of sickness, of lameness, of confinement, seemed only to make sweeter and sweeter,

and that frank politeness which at once relieved all the embarrassment of the youngest and most timid writer or artist, who found himself for the first time among ambassadors and earls. They will remember that constant flow of conversation, so natural, so animated, so various, so rich with observation and anecdote ; that wit which never gave a wound; that exquisite mimicry which ennobled, instead of degrading ; that goodness of heart which appeared in every look and accent, and gave additional value to every talent and acquirement. They will remember, too, that he whose name they hold in reverence was not less distinguished by the inflexible uprightness of his political conduct than by his loving disposition and his winning manners. They will remember that, in the last lines which he traced, he expressed his joy that he had done nothing unworthy of the friend of Fox and Grey ; and they will have reason to feel similar joy if, in looking back on many troubled years, they cannot accuse themselves of having done anything unworthy of men who were distinguished by the friendship of Lord Holland.

WARREN HASTINGS. (October, 1841.)

Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, First Governor-general of Bengal. Compiled from Original Papers by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, M.A. 3 vols., 8vo. London: 1841.

We are inclined to think that we shall best meet the wishes of our readers if, instead of minutely examining this book, we attempt to give, in a way necessarily hasty and imperfect, our own view of the life and character of Mr. Hastings. Our feeling towards him is not exactly that of the House of Commons which impeached him in 1787; neither is it that of the House of Commons which uncovered and stood up to receive him in 1813. He had great qualities, and he rendered great services to the State. But to represent him as a man of stainless virtue is to make him ridiculous; and from a regard for his memory, if from no other feeling, his friends would have done well to lend no countenance to such adulation. We believe that if he were now living he would have sufficient judgment and sufficient greatness of mind to wish to be shown as he was. He must have known that there were dark spots on his fame. He might also have felt with pride that the splendor of his fame would bear many spots. He would have wished posterity to have a likeness of him, though an unfavorable likeness, rather than a daub at once insipid and unnatural, resembling neither



him nor anybody else. "Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell while sitting to young Lely. "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles, I will not pay you a shilling." Even in such a trifle, the great Protector showed both his good sense and his magnanimity. He did not wish all that was characteristic in his countenance to be lost in the vain attempt to give him the regular features and smooth, blooming cheeks of the curl-pated minions of James the First. He was content that his face should go forth marked with all the blemishes which had been put on it by time, by war, by sleepless nights, by anxiety, perhaps by remorse; but with valor, policy, authority, and public care written in all its princely lines. If men truly great knew their own interest, it is thus that they would wish their minds to be portrayed.

Warren Hastings sprang from an ancient and illustrious race. It has been affirmed that his pedigree can be traced back to the great Danish sea-king whose sails were long the terror of both coasts of the British Channel, and who, after many fierce and doubtful struggles, yielded at last to the valor and genius of Alfred. But the undoubted splendor of the line of Hastings needs no illustration from fable. One branch of that line wore, in the fourteenth century, the coronet of Pembroke. From another branch sprang the renowned Chamberlain, the faithful adherent of the White Rose, whose fate has furnished so striking a theme both to poets and to historians. His family received from the Tudors the earldom of Huntingdon, which, after long dispossession, was regained in our time by a series of events scarcely paralleled in romance.

The lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcester-

shire, claimed to be considered as the heads of this distinguished family. The main stock, indeed, prospered less than some of the younger shoots. But the Daylesford family, though not ennobled, was wealthy and highly considered till, about two hundred years ago, it was overwhelmed by the great ruin of the Civil War. The Hastings of that time was a zealous Cavalier. He raised money on his lands, sent his plate to the mint at Oxford, joined the royal army, and, after spending half his property in the cause of King Charles, was glad to ransom himself by making over most of the remaining half to Speaker Lenthal. The old seat at Daylesford still remained in the family ; but it could no longer be kept up, and in the following generation it was sold to a merchant of London.

Before this transfer took place, the last Hastings of Daylesford had presented his second son to the rectory of the parish in which the ancient residence of the family stood. The living was of little value, and the situation of the poor clergyman after the sale of the estate was deplorable. He was constantly engaged in lawsuits about his tithes with the new lord of the manor, and was at length utterly ruined. His eldest son, Howard, a well-conducted young man, obtained a place in the Customs. The second son, Pynaston, an idle, worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife in two years, and died in the West Indies, leaving to the care of his unfortunate father a little orphan, destined to strange and memorable vicissitudes of fortune.

Warren, the son of Pynaston, was born on the sixth of December, 1732. His mother died a few days later, and he was left dependent on his distressed grandfather.

The child was early sent to the village school, where he learned his letters on the same bench with the sons of the peasantry. Nor did anything in his garb or fare indicate that his life was to take a widely different course from that of the young rustics with whom he studied and played. But no cloud could overcast the dawn of so much genius and so much ambition. The very ploughmen observed and long remembered how kindly little Warren took to his book. The daily sight of the lands which his ancestors had possessed, and which had passed into the hands of strangers, filled his young brain with wild fancies and projects. He loved to hear stories of the wealth and greatness of his progenitors, of their splendid housekeeping, their loyalty, and their valor. On one bright summer day the boy, then just seven years old, lay on the bank of the rivulet which flows through the old domain of his house to join the Isis. There, as threescore and ten years later he told the tale, rose in his mind a scheme which through all the turns of his eventful career was never abandoned. He would recover the estate which had belonged to his fathers. He would be Hastings of Daylesford. This purpose, formed in infancy and poverty, grew stronger as his intellect expanded and as his fortune rose. He pursued his plan with that calm but indomitable force of will which was the most striking peculiarity of his character. When, under a tropical sun, he ruled fifty millions of Asiatics, his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance, and legislation, still pointed to Daylesford. And when his long public life, so singularly checkered with good and evil, with glory and obloquy, had at length closed forever, it was to Daylesford that he retired to die.

When he was eight years old his uncle Howard determined to take charge of him and to give him a liberal education. The boy went up to London, and was sent to a school at Newington, where he was well taught, but ill fed. He always attributed the smallness of his stature to the hard and scanty fare of this seminary. At ten he was removed to Westminster School, then flourishing under the care of Dr. Nichols. Vinny Bourne, as his pupils affectionately called him, was one of the masters. Churchill, Colman, Lloyd, Cumberland, Cowper, were among the students. With Cowper Hastings formed a friendship which neither the lapse of time nor a wide dissimilarity of opinions and pursuits could wholly dissolve. It does not appear that they ever met after they had grown to manhood. But forty years later, when the voices of many great orators were crying for vengeance on the oppressor of India, the shy and secluded poet could image to himself Hastings the Governor-general only as the Hastings with whom he had rowed on the Thames and played in the cloister, and refused to believe that so good-tempered a fellow could have done anything very wrong. His own life had been spent in praying, musing, and rhyming among the water-lilies of the Ouse. He had preserved in no common measure the innocence of childhood. His spirit had, indeed, been severely tried, but not by temptations which impelled him to any gross violation of the rules of social morality. He had never been attacked by combinations of powerful and deadly enemies. He had never been compelled to make a choice between innocence and greatness, between crime and ruin. Firmly as he held in theory the doctrine of human depravity, his habits were such that he was unable to

conceive how far from the path of right even kind and noble natures may be hurried by the rage of conflict and the lust of dominion.

Hastings had another associate at Westminster of whom we shall have occasion to make frequent mention —Elijah Impey. We know little about their school-days. But we think we may safely venture to guess that whenever Hastings wished to play any trick more than usually naughty, he hired Impey with a tart or a ball to act as fag in the worst part of the prank.

Warren was distinguished among his comrades as an excellent swimmer, boatman, and scholar. At fourteen he was first in the examination for the foundation. His name in gilded letters on the walls of the dormitory still attests his victory over many older competitors. He stayed two years longer at the school, and was looking forward to a studentship at Christ Church, when an event happened which changed the whole course of his life. Howard Hastings died, bequeathing his nephew to the care of a friend and distant relation named Chiswick. This gentleman, though he did not absolutely refuse the charge, was desirous to rid himself of it as soon as possible. Dr. Nichols made strong remonstrances against the cruelty of interrupting the studies of a youth who seemed likely to be one of the first scholars of the age. He even offered to bear the expense of sending his favorite pupil to Oxford. But Mr. Chiswick was inflexible. He thought the years which had already been wasted on hexameters and pentameters quite sufficient. He had it in his power to obtain for the lad a writership in the service of the East India Company. Whether the young adventurer, when once shipped off, made a fortune or died of a

liver-complaint, he equally ceased to be a burden to anybody. Warren was accordingly removed from Westminster School and placed for a few months at a commercial academy to study arithmetic and book-keeping. In January, 1750, a few days after he had completed his seventeenth year, he sailed for Bengal, and arrived at his destination in the October following.

He was immediately placed at a desk in the Secretary's office at Calcutta, and labored there during two years. Fort William was then a purely commercial settlement. In the South of India the encroaching policy of Dupleix had transformed the servants of the English Company against their will into diplomatists and generals. The war of the succession was raging in the Carnatic, and the tide had been suddenly turned against the French by the genius of young Robert Clive. But in Bengal the European settlers, at peace with the natives and with each other, were wholly occupied with ledgers and bills of lading.

After two years passed in keeping accounts at Calcutta, Hastings was sent up the country to Cossimbuzar, a town which lies on the Hoogly, about a mile from Moorshedabad, and which then bore to Moorshedabad a relation, if we may compare small things with great, such as the city of London bears to Westminster. Moorshedabad was the abode of the prince who, by an authority ostensibly derived from the Mogul, but really independent, ruled the three great provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar. At Moorshedabad were the court, the harem, and the public offices. Cossimbuzar was a port and a place of trade, renowned for the quantity and excellence of the silks which were sold in its marts, and constantly receiving and sending forth fleets of

richly laden barges. At this important point the Company had established a small factory subordinate to that of Fort William. Here during several years Hastings was employed in making bargains for stuffs with native brokers. While he was thus engaged Surajah Dowlah succeeded to the government and declared war against the English. The defenceless settlement of Cossimbuzar, lying close to the tyrant's capital, was instantly seized. Hastings was sent a prisoner to Moorshedabad, but, in consequence of the humane intervention of the servants of the Dutch Company, was treated with indulgence. Meanwhile the Nabob marched on Calcutta ; the Governor and the commandant fled ; the town and citadel were taken, and most of the English prisoners perished in the Black Hole.

In these events originated the greatness of Warren Hastings. The fugitive Governor and his companions had taken refuge on the dreary islet of Fulda, near the mouth of the Hoogly. They were naturally desirous to obtain full information respecting the proceedings of the Nabob ; and no person seemed so likely to furnish it as Hastings, who was a prisoner at large in the immediate neighborhood of the court. He thus became a diplomatic agent, and soon established a high character for ability and resolution. The treason which at a later period was fatal to Surajah Dowlah was already in progress, and Hastings was admitted to the deliberations of the conspirators. But the time for striking had not arrived. It was necessary to postpone the execution of the design, and Hastings, who was now in extreme peril, fled to Fulda.

Soon after his arrival at Fulda the expedition from Madras, commanded by Clive, appeared in the Hoogly.

Warren—young, intrepid, and excited probably by the example of the Commander of the Forces, who, having, like himself, been a mercantile agent of the Company, had been turned by public calamities into a soldier—determined to serve in the ranks. During the early operations of the war he carried a musket. But the quick eye of Clive soon perceived that the head of the young volunteer would be more useful than his arm. When, after the battle of Plassey, Meer Jaffier was proclaimed Nabob of Bengal, Hastings was appointed to reside at the court of the new prince as agent for the Company.

He remained at Moorshedabad till the year 1761, when he became a member of Council, and was consequently forced to reside at Calcutta. This was during the interval between Clive's first and second administration, an interval which has left on the fame of the East India Company a stain not wholly effaced by many years of just and humane government. Mr. Vansittart, the Governor, was at the head of a new and anomalous empire. On the one side was a band of English functionaries, daring, intelligent, eager to be rich. On the other side was a great native population, helpless, timid, accustomed to crouch under oppression. To keep the stronger race from preying on the weaker was an undertaking which tasked to the utmost the talents and energy of Clive. Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. The master caste, as was natural, broke loose from all restraint; and then was seen what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles—the strength of civilization without its mercy. To all other despotism there is a check, imperfect, indeed, and liable to gross abuse, but still

sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance, when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment such as then afflicted Bengal it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence and energy of the dominant class made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against demons. The only protection which the conquered could find was in the moderation, the clemency, the enlarged policy, of the conquerors. That protection, at a later period, they found. But at first English power came among them unaccompanied by English morality. There was an interval between the time at which they became our subjects and the time at which we began to reflect that we were bound to discharge towards them the duties of rulers. During that interval the business of a servant of the Company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds as speedily as possible, that he might return home, before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, to buy rotten boroughs in Cornwall, and to give balls in St. James's Square. Of the conduct of Hastings at this time little is known; but the little that is known, and the circumstance that little is known, must be considered as honorable to him. He could not protect the natives; all that he could do was to abstain from plundering and oppressing them, and this he appears to have done. It is certain that at this time he con-

tinued poor ; and it is equally certain that by cruelty and dishonesty he might easily have become rich. It is certain that he was never charged with having borne a share in the worst abuses which then prevailed ; and it is almost equally certain that if he had borne a share in those abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt. The keen, severe, and even malevolent scrutiny to which his whole public life was subjected—a scrutiny unparalleled, as we believe, in the history of mankind—is in one respect advantageous to his reputation. It brought many lamentable blemishes to light, but it entitles him to be considered pure from every blemish which has not been brought to light.

The truth is that the temptations to which so many English functionaries yielded in the time of Mr. Vansittart were not temptations addressed to the ruling passions of Warren Hastings. He was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions ; but he was neither sordid nor rapacious. He was far too enlightened a man to look on a great empire merely as a buccaneer would look on a galleon. Had his heart been much worse than it was, his understanding would have preserved him from that extremity of baseness. He was an unscrupulous, perhaps an unprincipled, statesman ; but still he was a statesman, and not a freebooter.

In 1764 Hastings returned to England. He had realized only a very moderate fortune ; and that moderate fortune was soon reduced to nothing, partly by his praiseworthy liberality, and partly by his mismanagement. Towards his relations he appears to have acted very generously. The greater part of his savings

he left in Bengal, hoping probably to obtain the high usury of India. But high usury and bad security generally go together, and Hastings lost both interest and principal.

He remained four years in England. Of his life at this time very little is known. But it has been asserted, and is highly probable, that liberal studies and the society of men of letters occupied a great part of his time. It is to be remembered to his honor that in days when the languages of the East were regarded by other servants of the Company merely as a means of communicating with weavers and money-changers, his enlarged and accomplished mind sought in Asiatic learning for new forms of intellectual enjoyment and for new views of government and society. Perhaps, like most persons who have paid much attention to departments of knowledge which lie out of the common track, he was inclined to overrate the value of his favorite studies. He conceived that the cultivation of Persian literature might with advantage be made a part of the liberal education of an English gentleman, and he drew up a plan with that view. It is said that the University of Oxford, in which Oriental learning had never, since the revival of letters, been wholly neglected, was to be the seat of the institution which he contemplated. An endowment was expected from the munificence of the Company, and professors thoroughly competent to interpret Hafiz and Ferdusi were to be engaged in the East. Hastings called on Johnson with the hope, as it should seem, of interesting in this project a man who enjoyed the highest literary reputation, and who was particularly connected with Oxford. The interview appears to have left on John-

son's mind a most favorable impression of the talents and attainments of his visitor. Long after, when Hastings was ruling the immense population of British India, the old philosopher wrote to him, and referred in the most courtly terms, though with great dignity, to their short but agreeable intercourse.

Hastings soon began to look again towards India. He had little to attach him to England, and his pecuniary embarrassments were great. He solicited his old masters the Directors for employment. They acceded to his request with high compliments both to his abilities and to his integrity, and appointed him a member of Council at Madras. It would be unjust not to mention that, though forced to borrow money for his outfit, he did not withdraw any portion of the sum which he had appropriated to the relief of his distressed relations. In the spring of 1769 he embarked on board of the Duke of Grafton and commenced a voyage distinguished by incidents which might furnish matter for a novel.

Among the passengers in the Duke of Grafton was a German of the name of Imhoff. He called himself a baron ; but he was in distressed circumstances, and was going out to Madras as a portrait-painter, in the hope of picking up some of the pagodas which were then lightly got and as lightly spent by the English in India. The baron was accompanied by his wife, a native (we have somewhere read) of Archangel. This young woman, who, born under the Arctic circle, was destined to play the part of a queen under the tropic of Cancer, had an agreeable person, a cultivated mind, and manners in the highest degree engaging. She despised her husband heartily, and, as the story which we have to tell sufficiently proves, not without reason.

She was interested by the conversation, and flattered by the attentions of Hastings. The situation was indeed perilous. No place is so propitious to the formation either of close friendships or of deadly enmities as an Indiaman. There are very few people who do not find a voyage which lasts several months insupportably dull. Anything is welcome which may break that long monotony—a sail, a shark, an albatross, a man overboard. Most passengers find some resource in eating twice as many meals as on land. But the great devices for killing time are quarrelling and flirting. The facilities for both these exciting pursuits are great. The inmates of the ship are thrown together far more than in any country-seat or boarding-house. None can escape from the rest except by imprisoning himself in a cell in which he can hardly turn. All food, all exercise, is taken in company. Ceremony is to a great extent banished. It is every day in the power of a mischievous person to inflict innumerable annoyances; it is every day in the power of an amiable person to confer little services. It not seldom happens that serious distress and danger call forth in genuine beauty and deformity heroic virtues and abject vices which in the ordinary intercourse of good society might remain during many years unknown even to intimate associates. Under such circumstances met Warren Hastings and the Baroness Imhoff, two persons whose accomplishments would have attracted notice in any court of Europe. The gentleman had no domestic ties. The lady was tied to a husband for whom she had no regard, and who had no regard for his own honor. An attachment sprang up, which was soon strengthened by events such as could hardly have occurred on land.

Hastings fell ill. The baroness nursed him with womanly tenderness, gave him his medicines with her own hand, and even sat up in his cabin while he slept. Long before the Duke of Grafton reached Madras, Hastings was in love. But his love was of a most characteristic description. Like his hatred, like his ambition, like all his passions, it was strong, but not impetuous. It was calm, deep, earnest, patient of delay, unconquerable by time. Imhoff was called into council by his wife and his wife's lover. It was arranged that the baroness should institute a suit for a divorce in the courts of Franconia, that the baron should afford every facility to the proceeding, and that during the years which might elapse before the sentence should be pronounced they should continue to live together. It was also agreed that Hastings should bestow some very substantial marks of gratitude on the complaisant husband, and should, when the marriage was dissolved, make the lady his wife and adopt the children whom she had already borne to Imhoff.

At Madras Hastings found the trade of the Company in a very disorganized state. His own tastes would have led him rather to political than to commercial pursuits ; but he knew that the favor of his employers depended chiefly on their dividends, and that their dividends depended chiefly on the investment. He therefore, with great judgment, determined to apply his vigorous mind for a time to this department of business, which had been much neglected, since the servants of the Company had ceased to be clerks and had become warriors and negotiators.

In a very few months he effected an important reform. The Directors notified to him their high appro-

bation, and were so much pleased with his conduct that they determined to place him at the head of the government of Bengal. Early in 1772 he quitted Fort St. George for his new post. The Imhoffs, who were still man and wife, accompanied him, and lived at Calcutta on the same plan which they had already followed during more than two years.

When Hastings took his seat at the head of the council-board Bengal was still governed according to the system which Clive had devised—a system which was, perhaps, skilfully contrived for the purpose of facilitating and concealing a great revolution, but which, when that revolution was complete and irrevocable, could produce nothing but inconvenience. There were two governments, the real and the ostensible. The supreme power belonged to the Company, and was, in truth, the most despotic power that can be conceived. The only restraint on the English masters of the country was that which their own justice and humanity imposed on them. There was no constitutional check on their will, and resistance to them was utterly hopeless.

But, though thus absolute in reality, the English had not yet assumed the style of sovereignty. They held their territories as vassals of the throne of Delhi ; they raised their revenues as collectors appointed by the imperial commission ; their public seal was inscribed with the imperial titles ; and their mint struck only the imperial coin.

There was still a Nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his country in the same relation in which Augustulus stood to Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and Pepin. He lived at

Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of reverence, and his name was used in public instruments. But in the government of the country he had less real share than the youngest writer or cadet in the Company's service.

The English council which represented the Company at Calcutta was constituted on a very different plan from that which has since been adopted. At present the Governor is, as to all executive measures, absolute. He can declare war, conclude peace, appoint public functionaries or remove them, in opposition to the unanimous sense of those who sit with him in council. They are, indeed, entitled to know all that is done, to discuss all that is done, to advise, to remonstrate, to send protests to England ; but it is with the Governor that the supreme power resides, and on him that the whole responsibility rests. This system, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Burke, we conceive to be, on the whole, the best that was ever devised for the government of a country where no materials can be found for a representative constitution. In the time of Hastings the Governor had only one vote in council, and, in case of an equal division, a casting vote. It therefore happened not unfrequently that he was overruled on the gravest questions, and it was possible that he might be wholly excluded for years together from the real direction of public affairs.

The English functionaries at Fort William had as yet paid little or no attention to the internal government of Bengal. The only branch of politics about which they much busied themselves was negotiation

with the native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collection of revenue, were almost entirely neglected. We may remark that the phraseology of the Company's servants still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word "political" as synonymous with "diplomatic." We could name a gentleman still living who was described by the highest authority as an invaluable public servant, eminently fit to be at the head of the internal administration of a whole presidency, but unfortunately quite ignorant of all political business.

The internal government of Bengal the English rulers delegated to a great native minister, who was stationed at Moorshedabad. All military affairs, and, with the exception of what pertains to mere ceremonial, all foreign affairs, were withdrawn from his control; but the other departments of the administration were entirely confided to him. His own stipend amounted to near a hundred thousand pounds sterling a year. The personal allowance of the Nabob, amounting to more than three hundred thousand pounds a year, passed through the minister's hands, and was, to a great extent, at his disposal. The collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the maintenance of order, were left to this high functionary; and for the exercise of his immense power he was responsible to none but the British masters of the country.

A situation so important, lucrative, and splendid was naturally an object of ambition to the ablest and most powerful natives. Clive had found it difficult to decide between conflicting pretensions. Two candidates stood out prominently from the crowd, each of them the representative of a race and of a religion.

One of these was Mahommed Reza Khan, a Mussulman of Persian extraction, able, active, religious after the fashion of his people, and highly esteemed by them. In England he might, perhaps, have been regarded as a corrupt and greedy politician. But, tried by the lower standard of Indian morality, he might be considered as a man of integrity and honor.

His competitor was a Hindoo Brahmin whose name has, by a terrible and melancholy event, been inseparably associated with that of Warren Hastings, the Maharajah Nuncomar. This man had played an important part in all the revolutions which, since the time of Surajah Dowlah, had taken place in Bengal. To the consideration which in that country belongs to high and pure caste, he added the weight which is derived from wealth, talents, and experience. Of his moral character it is difficult to give a notion to those who are acquainted with human nature only as it appears in our island. What the Italian is to the Englishman, what the Hindoo is to the Italian, what the Bengalee is to other Hindoos, that was Nuncomar to other Bengalees. The physical organization of the Bengalee is feeble even to effeminacy. He lives in a constant vapor bath. His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movements languid. During many ages he has been trampled upon by men of bolder and more hardy breeds. Courage, independence, veracity, are qualities to which his constitution and his situation are equally unfavorable. His mind bears a singular analogy to his body. It is weak even to helplessness for purposes of manly resistance ; but its suppleness and its tact move the children of sterner climates to admiration not unmingled with contempt. All those arts which are the

natural defence of the weak are more familiar to this subtle race than to the Ionian of the time of Juvenal or to the Jew of the Dark Ages. What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty, according to the old Greek song, is to woman, deceit is to the Bengalee. Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery, are the weapons, offensive and defensive, of the people of the Lower Ganges. All those millions do not furnish one Sepoy to the armies of the Company. But as usurers, as money-changers, as sharp legal practitioners, no class of human beings can bear comparison with them. With all his softness, the Bengalee is by no means placable in his enmities or prone to pity. The pertinacity with which he adheres to his purposes yields only to the immediate pressure of fear. Nor does he lack a certain kind of courage which is often wanting to his masters. To inevitable evils he is sometimes found to oppose a passive fortitude such as the Stoics attributed to their ideal sage. A European warrior who rushes on a battery of cannon with a loud hurrah will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall into an agony of despair at the sentence of death. But the Bengalee who would see his country overrun, his house laid in ashes, his children murdered or dishonored, without having the spirit to strike one blow, has yet been known to endure torture with the firmness of Mucius, and to mount the scaffold with the steady step and even pulse of Algernon Sydney.

In Nuncomar the national character was strongly and with exaggeration personified. The Company's servants had repeatedly detected him in the most crim-

inal intrigues. On one occasion he brought a false charge against another Hindoo, and tried to substantiate it by producing forged documents. On another occasion it was discovered that, while professing the strongest attachment to the English, he was engaged in several conspiracies against them, and in particular that he was the medium of a correspondence between the Court of Delhi and the French authorities in the Carnatic. For these and similar practices he had been long detained in confinement. But his talents and influence had not only procured his liberation, but had obtained for him a certain degree of consideration even among the British rulers of his country.

Clive was extremely unwilling to place a Mussulman at the head of the administration of Bengal. On the other hand, he could not bring himself to confer immense power on a man to whom every sort of villany had repeatedly been brought home. Therefore, though the Nabob, over whom Nuncomar had by intrigue acquired great influence, begged that the artful Hindoo might be intrusted with the government, Clive, after some hesitation, decided honestly and wisely in favor of Mahommed Reza Khan. When Hastings became Governor, Mahommed Reza Khan had held power seven years. An infant son of Meer Jaffier was now Nabob ; and the guardianship of the young prince's person had been confided to the minister.

Nuncomar, stimulated at once by cupidity and malice, had been constantly attempting to hurt his successful rival. This was not difficult. The revenues of Bengal, under the administration established by Clive, did not yield such a surplus as had been anticipated by the Company ; for at that time the most

absurd notions were entertained in England respecting the wealth of India. Palaces of porphyry hung with the richest brocade, heaps of pearls and diamonds, vaults from which pagodas and gold mohurs were measured out by the bushel, filled the imagination even of men of business. Nobody seemed to be aware of what, nevertheless, was most undoubtedly the truth, that India was a poorer country than countries which in Europe are reckoned poor—than Ireland, for example, or than Portugal. It was confidently believed by lords of the Treasury and members for the city that Bengal would not only defray its own charges, but would afford an increased dividend to the proprietors of India stock, and large relief to the English finances. These absurd expectations were disappointed ; and the Directors, naturally enough, chose to attribute the disappointment rather to the mismanagement of Mahommed Reza Khan than to their own ignorance of the country intrusted to their care. They were confirmed in their error by the agents of Nuncomar ; for Nuncomar had agents even in Leadenhall Street. Soon after Hastings reached Calcutta, he received a letter addressed by the Court of Directors, not to the Council generally, but to himself in particular. He was directed to remove Mahommed Reza Khan, to arrest him, together with all his family and all his partisans, and to institute a strict inquiry into the whole administration of the province. It was added that the Governor would do well to avail himself of the assistance of Nuncomar in the investigation. The vices of Nuncomar were acknowledged. But even from his vices, it was said, much advantage might at such a conjuncture be derived ; and, though he could not safely be trusted, it

might still be proper to encourage him by hopes of reward.

The Governor bore no good-will to Nuncomar. Many years before, they had known each other at Moorshedabad ; and then a quarrel had risen between them which all the authority of their superiors could hardly compose. Widely as they differed in most points, they resembled each other in this, that both were men of unforgiving natures. To Mahommed Reza Khan, on the other hand, Hastings had no feelings of hostility. Nevertheless, he proceeded to execute the instructions of the Company with an alacrity which he never showed except when instructions were in perfect conformity with his own views. He had, wisely, as we think, determined to get rid of the system of double government in Bengal. The orders of the Directors furnished him with the means of effecting his purpose, and dispensed him from the necessity of discussing the matter with his Council. He took his measures with his usual vigor and dexterity. At midnight, the palace of Mahommed Reza Khan at Moorshedabad was surrounded by a battalion of Sepoys. The minister was roused from his slumbers and informed that he was a prisoner. With the Mussulman gravity, he bent his head and submitted himself to the will of God. He fell not alone. A chief named Schitab Roy had been intrusted with the government of Bahar. His valor and his attachment to the English had more than once been signally proved. On that memorable day on which the people of Patna saw from their walls the whole army of the Mogul scattered by the little band of Captain Knox, the voice of the British conquerors assigned the palm of gallantry to the brave Asiatic.

"I never," said Knox, when he introduced Schitab Roy, covered with blood and dust, to the English functionaries assembled in the factory—"I never saw a native fight so before." Schitab Roy was involved in the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan, was removed from office, and was placed under arrest. The members of the Council received no intimation of these measures till the prisoners were on their road to Calcutta.

The inquiry into the conduct of the minister was postponed on different pretences. He was detained in an easy confinement during many months. In the meantime, the great revolution which Hastings had planned was carried into effect. The office of minister was abolished. The internal administration was transferred to the servants of the Company. A system, a very imperfect system, it is true, of civil and criminal justice, under English superintendence, was established. The Nabob was no longer to have even an ostensible share in the government; but he was still to receive a considerable annual allowance, and to be surrounded with the state of sovereignty. As he was an infant, it was necessary to provide guardians for his person and property. His person was intrusted to a lady of his father's harem, known by the name of the Munny Begum. The office of treasurer of the household was bestowed on a son of Nuncomar, named Goordas. Nuncomar's services were wanted, yet he could not safely be trusted with power; and Hastings thought it a master-stoke of policy to reward the able and unprincipled parent by promoting the inoffensive child.

The revolution completed, the double government dissolved, the Company installed in the full sovereignty of Bengal, Hastings had no motive to treat the late

ministers with rigor. Their trial had been put off on various pleas till the new organization was complete. They were then brought before a committee over which the Governor presided. Schitab Roy was speedily acquitted with honor. A formal apology was made to him for the restraint to which he had been subjected. All the Eastern marks of respect were bestowed on him. He was clothed in a robe of state, presented with jewels and with a richly harnessed elephant, and sent back to his government at Patna. But his health had suffered from confinement ; his high spirit had been cruelly wounded ; and soon after his liberation he died of a broken heart.

The innocence of Mahommed Reza Khan was not so clearly established. But the Governor was not disposed to deal harshly. After a long hearing, in which Nuncomar appeared as the accuser, and displayed both the art and the inveterate rancor which distinguished him, Hastings pronounced that the charges had not been made out, and ordered the fallen minister to be set at liberty.

Nuncomar had purposed to destroy the Mussulman administration and to rise on its ruin. Both his malevolence and his cupidity had been disappointed. Hastings had made him a tool, had used him for the purpose of accomplishing the transfer of the government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, from native to European hands. The rival, the enemy, so long envied, so implacably persecuted, had been dismissed unhurt. The situation so long and ardently desired had been abolished. It was natural that the Governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin. As yet, however, it was necessary to suppress such feelings. The time was

coming when that long animosity was to end in a desperate and deadly struggle.

In the meantime, Hastings was compelled to turn his attention to foreign affairs. The object of his diplomacy was at this time simply to get money. The finances of his government were in an embarrassed state ; and this embarrassment he was determined to relieve by some means, fair or foul. The principle which directed all his dealings with his neighbors is fully expressed by the old motto of one of the great predatory families of Teviotdale, " Thou shalt want ere I want." He seems to have laid it down as a fundamental proposition which could not be disputed, that when he had not as many lacs of rupees as the public service required, he was to take them from anybody who had. One thing, indeed, is to be said in excuse for him. The pressure applied to him by his employers at home was such as only the highest virtue could have withstood, such as left him no choice except to commit great wrongs, or to resign his high post, and with that post all his hopes of fortune and distinction. The Directors, it is true, never enjoined or applauded any crime. Far from it. Whoever examines their letters written at that time will find there many just and humane sentiments, many excellent precepts—in short, an admirable code of political ethics. But every exhortation is modified or nullified by a demand for money. " Govern leniently, and send more money ; practise strict justice and moderation towards neighboring powers, and send more money ; " this is, in truth, the sum of almost all the instructions that Hastings ever received from home. Now these instructions, being interpreted, mean simply, " Be the father and the

oppressor of the people ; be just and unjust, moderate and rapacious." The Directors dealt with India as the Church, in the good old times, dealt with a heretic. They delivered the victim over to the executioners, with an earnest request that all possible tenderness might be shown. We by no means accuse or suspect those who framed these despatches of hypocrisy. It is probable that, writing fifteen thousand miles from the place where their orders were to be carried into effect, they never perceived the gross inconsistency of which they were guilty. But the inconsistency was at once manifest to their vicegerent at Calcutta, who, with an empty treasury, with an unpaid army, with his own salary often in arrear, with deficient crops, with government tenants daily running away, was called upon to remit home another half million without fail. Hastings saw that it was absolutely necessary for him to disregard either the moral discourses or the pecuniary requisitions of his employers. Being forced to disobey them in something, he had to consider what kind of disobedience they would most readily pardon ; and he correctly judged that the safest course would be to neglect the sermons and to find the rupees.

A mind so fertile as his, and so little restrained by conscientious scruples, speedily discovered several modes of relieving the financial embarrassments of the government. The allowance of the Nabob of Bengal was reduced at a stroke from three hundred and twenty thousand pounds a year to half that sum. The Company had bound itself to pay near three hundred thousand pounds a year to the Great Mogul, as a mark of homage for the provinces which he had intrusted to their care ; and they had ceded to him the districts of

Corah and Allahabad. On the plea that the Mogul was not really independent, but merely a tool in the hands of others, Hastings determined to retract these concessions. He accordingly declared that the English would pay no more tribute, and sent troops to occupy Allahabad and Corah. The situation of these places was such that there would be little advantage and great expense in retaining them. Hastings, who wanted money and not territory, determined to sell them. A purchaser was not wanting. The rich province of Oude had, in the general dissolution of the Mogul Empire, fallen to the share of the great Mussulman house by which it is still governed. About twenty years ago, this house, by the permission of the British government, assumed the royal title ; but in the time of Warren Hastings such an assumption would have been considered by the Mahometans of India as a monstrous impiety. The Prince of Oude, though he held the power, did not venture to use the style, of sovereignty. To the appellation of Nabob or Viceroy he added that of Vizier of the monarchy of Hindostan, just as in the last century the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, though independent of the Emperor, and often in arms against him, were proud to style themselves his Grand Chamberlain and Grand Marshal. Surajah Dowlah, then Nabob Vizier, was on excellent terms with the English. He had a large treasure. Allahabad and Corah were so situated that they might be of use to him, and could be of none to the Company. The buyer and seller soon came to an understanding ; and the provinces which had been torn from the Mogul were made over to the government of Oude for about half a million sterling.

But there was another matter still more important to be settled by the Vizier and the Governor. The fate of a brave people was to be decided. It was decided in a manner which has left a lasting stain on the fame of Hastings and of England.

The people of Central Asia had always been to the inhabitants of India what the warriors of the German forests were to the subjects of the decaying monarchy of Rome. The dark, slender, and timid Hindoo shrank from a conflict with the strong muscle and resolute spirit of the fair race which dwelt beyond the passes. There is reason to believe that, at a period anterior to the dawn of regular history, the people who spoke the rich and flexible Sanscrit came from regions lying far beyond the Hyphasis and the Hydaspes, and imposed their yoke on the children of the soil. It is certain that, during the last ten centuries, a succession of invaders descended from the west on Hindostan ; nor was the course of conquest ever turned back towards the setting sun till that memorable campaign in which the cross of St. George was planted on the walls of Ghizni.

The emperors of Hindostan themselves came from the other side of the great mountain ridge ; and it had always been their practice to recruit their army from the hardy and valiant race from which their own illustrious house sprang. Among the military adventurers who were allured to the Mogul standards, from the neighborhood of Cabul and Candahar, were conspicuous several gallant bands, known by the name of the Rohillas. Their services had been rewarded with large tracts of land, fiefs of the spear, if we may use an expression drawn from an analogous state of things, in

that fertile plain through which the Ramgunga flows from the snowy heights of Kumaon to join the Ganges. In the general confusion which followed the death of Aurungzebe, the warlike colony became virtually independent. The Rohillas were distinguished from the other inhabitants of India by a peculiarly fair complexion. They were more honorably distinguished by courage in war and by skill in the arts of peace. While anarchy raged from Lahore to Cape Comorin, their little territory enjoyed the blessings of repose under the guardianship of valor. Agriculture and commerce flourished among them ; nor were they negligent of rhetoric and poetry. Many persons now living have heard aged men talk with regret of the golden days when the Afghan princes ruled in the vale of Rohilcund.

Surajah Dowlah had set his heart on adding this rich district to his own principality. Right, or show of right, he had absolutely none. His claim was in no respect better founded than that of Catherine to Poland, or that of the Bonaparte family to Spain. The Rohillas held their country by exactly the same title by which he held his, and had governed their country far better than his had ever been governed. Nor were they a people whom it was perfectly safe to attack. Their land was, indeed, an open plain, destitute of natural defences ; but their veins were full of the high blood of Afghanistan. As soldiers, they had not the steadiness which is seldom found except in company with strict discipline ; but their impetuous valor had been proved on many fields of battle. It was said that their chiefs, when united by common peril, could bring eighty thousand men into the field. Surajah Dowlah had himself seen them fight, and wisely shrank from a

conflict with them. There was in India one army, and only one, against which even those proud Caucasian tribes could not stand. It had been abundantly proved that neither tenfold odds nor the martial ardor of the boldest Asiatic nations could avail aught against English science and resolution. Was it possible to induce the Governor of Bengal to let out to hire the irresistible energies of the imperial people, the skill against which the ablest chiefs of Hindostan were helpless as infants, the discipline which had so often triumphed over the frantic struggles of fanaticism and despair, the unconquerable British courage which is never so sedate and stubborn as towards the close of a doubtful and murderous day?

This was what the Nabob Vizier asked and what Hastings granted. A bargain was soon struck. Each of the negotiators had what the other wanted. Hastings was in need of funds to carry on the government of Bengal and to send remittances to London; and Surajah Dowlah had an ample revenue. Surajah Dowlah was bent on subjugating the Rohillas; and Hastings had at his disposal the only force by which the Rohillas could be subjugated. It was agreed that an English army should be lent to the Nabob Vizier, and that, for the loan, he should pay four hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides defraying all the charge of the troops while employed in his service.

"I really cannot see," says Mr. Gleig, "upon what grounds, either of political or moral justice, this proposition deserves to be stigmatized as infamous." If we understand the meaning of words, it is infamous to commit a wicked action for hire, and it is wicked to engage in war without provocation. In this particular

war, scarcely one aggravating circumstance was wanting. The object of the Rohilla war was this, to deprive a large population, who had never done us the least harm, of a good government, and to place them, against their will, under an execrably bad one. Nay, even this is not all. England now descended far below the level even of those petty German princes who, about the same time, sold us troops to fight the Americans. The hussar-mongers of Hesse and Anspach had at least the assurance that the expeditions on which their soldiers were to be employed would be conducted in conformity with the humane rules of civilized warfare. Was the Rohilla war likely to be so conducted? Did the Governor stipulate that it should be so conducted? He well knew what Indian warfare was. He well knew that the power which he covenanted to put into Surajah Dowlah's hands would, in all probability, be atrociously abused; and he required no guarantee, no promise that it should not be so abused. He did not even reserve to himself the right of withdrawing his aid in case of abuse, however gross. We are almost ashamed to notice Major Scott's absurd plea that Hastings was justified in letting out English troops to slaughter the Rohillas, because the Rohillas were not of Indian race, but a colony from a distant country. What were the English themselves? Was it for them to proclaim a crusade for the expulsion of all intruders from the countries watered by the Ganges? Did it lie in their mouths to contend that a foreign settler who establishes an empire in India is a *caput lupinum?* What would they have said if any other power had, on such a ground, attacked Madras or Calcutta without the slightest provocation? Such a defence was wanting

to make the infamy of the transaction complete. The atrocity of the crime and the hypocrisy of the apology are worthy of each other.

One of the three brigades of which the Bengal army consisted was sent under Colonel Champion to join Surajah Dowlah's forces. The Rohillas expostulated, entreated, offered a large ransom, but in vain. They then resolved to defend themselves to the last. A bloody battle was fought. "The enemy," says Colonel Champion, "gave proof of a good share of military knowledge; and it is impossible to describe a more obstinate firmness of resolution than they displayed." The dastardly sovereign of Oude fled from the field. The English were left unsupported; but their fire and their charge were irresistible. It was not, however, till the most distinguished chiefs had fallen, fighting bravely at the head of their troops, that the Rohilla ranks gave way. Then the Nabob Vizier and his rabble made their appearance, and hastened to plunder the camp of the valiant enemies whom they had never dared to look in the face. The soldiers of the Company, trained in an exact discipline, kept unbroken order, while the tents were pillaged by these worthless allies. But many voices were heard to exclaim, "We have had all the fighting, and those rogues are to have all the profit."

Then the horrors of Indian war were let loose on the fair valleys and cities of Rohilcund. The whole country was in a blaze. More than a hundred thousand people fled from their homes to pestilential jungles, preferring famine and fever and the haunts of tigers to the tyranny of him to whom an English and a Christian government had, for shameful lucre, sold their

substance and their blood and the honor of their wives and daughters. Colonel Champion remonstrated with the Nabob Vizier, and sent strong representations to Fort William; but the Governor had made no conditions as to the mode in which the war was to be carried on. He had troubled himself about nothing but his forty lacs; and, though he might disapprove of Surajah Dowlah's wanton barbarity, he did not think himself entitled to interfere, except by offering advice. This delicacy excites the admiration of the biographer. "Mr. Hastings," he says, "could not himself dictate to the Nabob, nor permit the commander of the Company's troops to dictate, how the war was to be carried on." No, to be sure. Mr. Hastings had only to put down by main force the brave struggles of innocent men fighting for their liberty. Their military resistance crushed, his duties ended; and he had then only to fold his arms and look on while their villages were burned, their children butchered, and their women violated. Will Mr. Gleig seriously maintain this opinion? Is any rule more plain than this, that whoever voluntarily gives to another irresistible power over human beings is bound to take order that such power shall not be barbarously abused? But we beg pardon of our readers for arguing a point so clear.

We hasten to the end of this sad and disgraceful story. The war ceased. The finest population in India was subjected to a greedy, cowardly, cruel tyrant. Commerce and agriculture languished. The rich province which had tempted the cupidity of Surajah Dowlah became the most miserable part even of his miserable dominions. Yet is the injured nation not extinct. At long intervals gleams of its ancient spirit

have flashed forth ; and, even at this day, valor and self-respect, and a chivalrous feeling rare among Asiatics, and a bitter remembrance of the great crime of England, distinguish that noble Afghan race. To this day they are regarded as the best of all Sepoys at the cold steel ; and it was very recently remarked by one who had enjoyed great opportunities of observation that the only natives of India to whom the word "gentleman" can with perfect propriety be applied are to be found among the Rohillas.

Whatever we may think of the morality of Hastings, it cannot be denied that the financial results of his policy did honor to his talents. In less than two years after he assumed the government, he had, without imposing any additional burdens on the people subject to his authority, added about four hundred and fifty thousand pounds to the annual income of the Company, besides procuring about a million in ready money. He had also relieved the finances of Bengal from military expenditure, amounting to near a quarter of a million a year, and had thrown that charge on the Nabob of Oude. There can be no doubt that this was a result which, if it had been obtained by honest means, would have entitled him to the warmest gratitude of his country, and which, by whatever means obtained, proved that he possessed great talents for administration.

In the meantime, Parliament had been engaged in long and grave discussions on Asiatic affairs. The ministry of Lord North, in the session of 1773, introduced a measure which made a considerable change in the constitution of the Indian government. This law, known by the name of the Regulating Act, provided

that the presidency of Bengal should exercise a control over the possessions of the Company; that the chief of that presidency should be styled Governor-general; that he should be assisted by four councillors; and that a supreme court of judicature, consisting of a chief-justice and three inferior judges, should be established at Calcutta. This court was made independent of the Governor-general and Council, and was intrusted with a civil and criminal jurisdiction of immense, and, at the same time, of undefined, extent.

The Governor-general and councillors were named in the act, and were to hold their situations for five years. Hastings was to be the first Governor-general. One of the four new councillors, Mr. Barwell, an experienced servant of the Company, was then in India. The other three—General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis—were sent out from England.

The ablest of the new councillors was, beyond all doubt, Philip Francis. His acknowledged compositions prove that he possessed considerable eloquence and information. Several years passed in the public offices had formed him to habits of business. His enemies have never denied that he had a fearless and manly spirit; and his friends, we are afraid, must acknowledge that his estimate of himself was extravagantly high, that his temper was irritable, that his deportment was often rude and petulant, and that his hatred was of intense bitterness and long duration.

It is scarcely possible to mention this eminent man without adverting for a moment to the question which his name at once suggests to every mind. Was he the author of the Letters of Junius? Our own firm belief is that he was. The evidence is, we think, such as

would support a verdict in a civil—nay, in a criminal —proceeding. The handwriting of Junius is the very peculiar handwriting of Francis, slightly disguised. As to the position, pursuits, and connections of Junius, the following are the most important facts which can be considered as clearly proved : First, that he was acquainted with the technical forms of the Secretary of State's office ; secondly, that he was intimately acquainted with the business of the War-office ; thirdly, that he, during the year 1770, attended debates in the House of Lords, and took notes of speeches, particularly of the speeches of Lord Chatham ; fourthly, that he bitterly resented the appointment of Mr. Chamier to the place of Deputy Secretary at War ; fifthly, that he was bound by some strong tie to the first Lord Holland. Now, Francis passed some years in the Secretary of State's office. He was subsequently chief clerk of the War-office. He repeatedly mentioned that he had himself, in 1770, heard speeches of Lord Chatham ; and some of these speeches were actually printed from his notes. He resigned his clerkship at the War-office from resentment at the appointment of Mr. Chamier. It was by Lord Holland that he was first introduced into the public service. Now, here are five marks, all of which ought to be found in Junius. They are all five found in Francis. We do not believe that more than two of them can be found in any other person whatever. If this argument does not settle the question, there is an end of all reasoning on circumstantial evidence.

The internal evidence seems to us to point the same way. The style of Francis bears a strong resemblance to that of Junius ; nor are we disposed to admit, what

is generally taken for granted, that the acknowledged compositions of Francis are very decidedly inferior to the anonymous letters. The argument from inferiority, at all events, is one which may be urged with at least equal force against every claimant that has ever been mentioned, with the single exception of Burke ; and it would be a waste of time to prove that Burke was not Junius. And what conclusion, after all, can be drawn from mere inferiority ? Every writer must produce his best work ; and the interval between his best work and his second best work may be very wide indeed. Nobody will say that the best letters of Junius are more decidedly superior to the acknowledged works of Francis than three or four of Corneille's tragedies to the rest, than three or four of Ben Jonson's comedies to the rest, than the Pilgrim's Progress to the other works of Bunyan, than Don Quixote to the other works of Cervantes. Nay, it is certain that Junius, whoever he may have been, was a most unequal writer. To go no further than the letters which bear the signature of Junius, the letter to the King and the letters to Horne Tooke have little in common, except the asperity; and asperity was an ingredient seldom wanting either in the writings or in the speeches of Francis.

Indeed, one of the strongest reasons for believing that Francis was Junius is the moral resemblance between the two men. It is not difficult, from the letters which, under various signatures, are known to have been written by Junius, and from his dealings with Woodfall and others, to form a tolerably correct notion of his character. He was clearly a man not destitute of real patriotism and magnanimity, a man whose vices were not of a sordid kind. But he must

also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent, a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked in old time of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered, "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he who, under a strong self-delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties. It may be added that Junius, though allied with the democratic party by common enmities, was the very opposite of a democratic politician. While attacking individuals with a ferocity which perpetually violated all the laws of literary warfare, he regarded the most defective parts of old institutions with a respect amounting to pedantry, pleaded the cause of Old Sarum with fervor, and contemptuously told the capitalists of Manchester and Leeds that if they wanted votes they might buy land and become freeholders of Lancashire and Yorkshire. All this, we believe, might stand, with scarcely any change, for a character of Philip Francis.

It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country which had been so powerfully stirred by his eloquence. Everything had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater part of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to Junius. His opinions on domestic affairs sepa-

rated him from the ministry ; his opinions on colonial affairs from the Opposition. Under such circumstances he had thrown down his pen in misanthropical despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the nineteenth of January, 1773. In that letter he declared that he must be an idiot to write again ; that he had meant well by the cause and the public ; that both were given up ; that there were not ten men who would act steadily together on any question. " But it is all alike," he added, " vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know of ; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity." These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time, Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal.

With the three new councillors came out the judges of the Supreme Court. The Chief-justice was Sir Elijah Impey. He was an old acquaintance of Hastings ; and it is probable that the Governor-general, if he had searched through all the Inns of Court, could not have found an equally serviceable tool. But the members of Council were by no means in an obsequious mood. Hastings greatly disliked the new form of government, and had no very high opinion of his coadjutors. They had heard of this, and were disposed to be suspicious and punctilious. When men are in such a frame of mind, any trifle is sufficient to give occasion for dispute. The members of Council expected a salute of twenty-one guns from the batteries of Fort William. Hastings allowed them only seventeen. They landed in ill-humor. The first civilities were exchanged with cold reserve. On the morrow commenced that long quarrel which, after distracting British India, was renewed in England, and in which all the most eminent

statesmen and orators of the age took active part on one or the other side.

Hastings was supported by Barwell. They had not always been friends. But the arrival of the new members of Council from England naturally had the effect of uniting the old servants of the Company. Clavering, Monson, and Francis formed the majority. They instantly wrested the government out of the hands of Hastings ; condemned, certainly not without justice, his late dealings with the Nabob Vizier ; recalled the English agent from Oude, and sent thither a creature of their own ; ordered the brigade which had conquered the unhappy Rohillas to return to the Company's territories ; and instituted a severe inquiry into the conduct of the war. Next, in spite of the Governor-general's remonstrances, they proceeded to exercise, in the most indiscreet manner, their new authority over the subordinate presidencies ; threw all the affairs of Bombay into confusion ; and interfered, with an incredible union of rashness and feebleness, in the intestine disputes of the Mahratta government. At the same time they fell on the internal administration of Bengal, and attacked the whole fiscal and judicial system—a system which was undoubtedly defective, but which it was very improbable that gentlemen fresh from England would be competent to amend. The effect of their reforms was that all protection to life and property was withdrawn, and that gangs of robbers plundered and slaughtered with impunity in the very suburbs of Calcutta. Hastings continued to live in the Government-house and to draw the salary of Governor-general. He continued even to take the lead at the Council-board in the transaction of ordinary business ;

for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided, both surely and speedily, many questions which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling. But the higher powers of government and the most valuable patronage had been taken from him.

The natives soon found this out. They considered him as a fallen man ; and they acted after their kind. Some of our readers may have seen in India a cloud of crows pecking a sick vulture to death—no bad type of what happens in that country as often as fortune deserts one who has been great and dreaded. In an instant all the sycophants who had lately been ready to lie for him, to forge for him, to pander for him, to poison for him, hasten to purchase the favor of his victorious enemies by accusing him. An Indian government has only to let it be understood that it wishes a particular man to be ruined ; and in twenty-four hours it will be furnished with grave charges, supported by depositions so full and circumstantial that any person unaccustomed to Asiatic mendacity would regard them as decisive. It is well if the signature of the destined victim is not counterfeited at the foot of some illegal compact, and if some treasonable paper is not slipped into a hiding-place in his house. Hastings was now regarded as helpless. The power to make or mar the fortune of every man in Bengal had passed, as it seemed, into the hands of the new councillors. Immediately charges against the Governor-general began to pour in. They were eagerly welcomed by the majority, who, to do them justice, were men of too much honor knowingly to countenance false accusations, but who were not sufficiently acquainted with the East to be aware that

in that part of the world a very little encouragement from power will call forth in a week more Oateses and Bedloes and Dangerfields than Westminster Hall sees in a century.

It would have been strange, indeed, if, at such a juncture, Nuncomar had remained quiet. That bad man was stimulated at once by malignity, by avarice, and by ambition. Now was the time to be avenged on his old enemy, to wreak a grudge of seventeen years, to establish himself in the favor of the majority of the Council, to become the greatest native in Bengal. From the time of the arrival of the new councillors he had paid the most marked court to them, and had, in consequence, been excluded, with all indignity, from the Government-house. He now put into the hands of Francis, with great ceremony, a paper containing several charges of the most serious description. By this document Hastings was accused of putting offices up to sale, and of receiving bribes for suffering offenders to escape. In particular, it was alleged that Mahommed Reza Khan had been dismissed with impunity, in consideration of a great sum paid to the Governor-general.

Francis read the paper in Council. A violent altercation followed. Hastings complained in bitter terms of the way in which he was treated, spoke with contempt of Nuncomar and of Nuncomar's accusation, and denied the right of the Council to sit in judgment on the Governor. At the next meeting of the Board, another communication from Nuncomar was produced. He requested that he might be permitted to attend the Council, and that he might be heard in support of his assertions. Another tempestuous debate took place.

The Governor-general maintained that the council-room was not a proper place for such an investigation ; that from persons who were heated by daily conflict with him he could not expect the fairness of judges ; and that he could not, without betraying the dignity of his post, submit to be confronted with such a man as Nuncomar. The majority, however, resolved to go into the charges. Hastings rose, declared the sitting at an end, and left the room, followed by Barwell. The other members kept their seats, voted themselves a council, put Clavering in the chair, and ordered Nuncomar to be called in. Nuncomar not only adhered to the original charges, but, after the fashion of the East, produced a large supplement. He stated that Hastings had received a great sum for appointing Rajah Goordas treasurer of the Nabob's household, and for committing the care of his Highness's person to the Munny Begum. He put in a letter purporting to bear the seal of the Munny Begum, for the purpose of establishing the truth of his story. The seal, whether forged, as Hastings affirmed, or genuine, as we are rather inclined to believe, proved nothing. Nuncomar, as everybody knows who knows India, had only to tell the Munny Begum that such a letter would give pleasure to the majority of the Council, in order to procure her attestation. The majority, however, voted that the charge was made out ; that Hastings had corruptly received between thirty and forty thousand pounds ; and that he ought to be compelled to refund.

The general feeling among the English in Bengal was strongly in favor of the Governor-general. In talents for business, in knowledge of the country, in general courtesy of demeanor, he was decidedly superior

to his persecutors. The servants of the Company were naturally disposed to side with the most distinguished member of their own body against a clerk from the War-office, who, profoundly ignorant of the native languages and of the native character, took on himself to regulate every department of the administration. Hastings, however, in spite of the general sympathy of his countrymen, was in a most painful situation. There was still an appeal to higher authority in England. If that authority took part with his enemies, nothing was left to him but to throw up his office. He accordingly placed his resignation in the hands of his agent in London, Colonel Macleane. But Macleane was instructed not to produce the resignation unless it should be fully ascertained that the feeling at the India House was adverse to the Governor-general.

The triumph of Nuncomar seemed to be complete. He held a daily levee, to which his countrymen resorted in crowds, and to which, on one occasion, the majority of the Council condescended to repair. His house was an office for the purpose of receiving charges against the Governor-general. It was said that, partly by threats and partly by wheedling, the villanous Brahmin had induced many of the wealthiest men of the province to send in complaints. But he was playing a perilous game. It was not safe to drive to despair a man of such resources and of such determination as Hastings. Nuncomar, with all his acuteness, did not understand the nature of the institutions under which he lived. He saw that he had with him the majority of the body which made treaties, gave places, raised taxes. The separation between political and judicial functions was a thing of which he had no conception. It had prob-

ably never occurred to him that there was in Bengal an authority perfectly independent of the Council, an authority which could protect one whom the Council wished to destroy, and send to the gibbet one whom the Council wished to protect. Yet such was the fact. The Supreme Court was, within the sphere of its own duties, altogether independent of the government. Hastings, with his usual sagacity, had seen how much advantage he might derive from possessing himself of this stronghold ; and he had acted accordingly. The judges, especially the Chief-justice, were hostile to the majority of the Council. The time had now come for putting this formidable machinery into action.

On a sudden, Calcutta was astounded by the news that Nuncomar had been taken up on a charge of felony, committed, and thrown into the common jail. The crime imputed to him was that six years before he had forged a bond. The ostensible prosecutor was a native. But it was then, and still is, the opinion of everybody, idiots and biographers excepted, that Hastings was the real mover in the business.

The rage of the majority rose to the highest point. They protested against the proceedings of the Supreme Court, and sent several urgent messages to the judges, demanding that Nuncomar should be admitted to bail. The judges returned haughty and resolute answers. All that the Council could do was to heap honors and emoluments on the family of Nuncomar ; and this they did. In the meantime the assizes commenced ; a true bill was found ; and Nuncomar was brought before Sir Elijah Impey and a jury composed of Englishmen. A great quantity of contradictory swearing, and the necessity of having every word of the evidence inter-

preted, protracted the trial to a most unusual length. At last a verdict of guilty was returned, and the Chief-justice pronounced sentence of death on the prisoner.

That Impey ought to have respited Nuncomar we hold to be perfectly clear. Whether the whole proceeding was not illegal is a question. But it is certain that, whatever may have been, according to technical rules of construction, the effect of the statute under which the trial took place, it was most unjust to hang a Hindoo for forgery. The law which made forgery capital in England was passed without the smallest reference to the state of society in India. It was unknown to the natives of India. It had never been put in execution among them, certainly not for want of delinquents. It was in the highest degree shocking to all their notions. They were not accustomed to the distinction which many circumstances, peculiar to our own state of society, have led us to make between forgery and other kinds of cheating. The counterfeiting of a seal was, in their estimation, a common act of swindling ; nor had it ever crossed their minds that it was to be punished as severely as gang-robbery or assassination. A just judge would, beyond all doubt, have reserved the case for the consideration of the sovereign. But Impey would not hear of mercy or delay.

The excitement among all classes was great. Francis and Francis's few English adherents described the Governor-general and the Chief-justice as the worst of murderers. Clavering, it was said, swore that, even at the foot of the gallows, Nuncomar should be rescued. The bulk of the European society, though strongly attached to the Governor-general, could not but feel

compassion for a man who, with all his crimes, had so long filled so large a space in their sight, who had been great and powerful before the British empire in India began to exist, and to whom, in the old times, governors and members of Council, then mere commercial factors, had paid court for protection. The feeling of the Hindoos was infinitely stronger. They were, indeed, not a people to strike one blow for their countryman. But his sentence filled them with sorrow and dismay. Tried even by their low standard of morality, he was a bad man. But, bad as he was, he was the head of their race and religion, a Brahmin of the Brahmins. He had inherited the purest and highest caste. He had practised with the greatest punctuality all those ceremonies to which the superstitious Bengalees ascribe far more importance than to the correct discharge of the social duties. They felt, therefore, as a devout Catholic in the Dark Ages would have felt at seeing a prelate of the highest dignity sent to the gallows by a secular tribunal. According to their old national laws, a Brahmin could not be put to death for any crime whatever. And the crime for which Nuncomar was about to die was regarded by them in much the same light in which the selling of an unsound horse, for a sound price, is regarded by a Yorkshire jockey.

The Mussulmans alone appear to have seen with exultation the fate of the powerful Hindoo, who had attempted to rise by means of the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan. The Mahometan historian of those times takes delight in aggravating the charge. He assures us that in Nuncomar's house a casket was found containing counterfeits of the seals of all the richest men of the province. We have never fallen in with any

other authority for this story, which in itself is by no means improbable.

The day drew near; and Nuncomar prepared himself to die with that quiet fortitude with which the Bengalee, so effeminately timid in personal conflict, often encounters calamities for which there is no remedy. The sheriff, with the humanity which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman, visited the prisoner on the eve of the execution, and assured him that no indulgence consistent with the law should be refused to him. Nuncomar expressed his gratitude with great politeness and unaltered composure. Not a muscle of his face moved. Not a sigh broke from him. He put his finger to his forehead, and calmly said that fate would have its way, and that there was no resisting the pleasure of God. He sent his compliments to Francis, Clavering, and Monson, and charged them to protect Rajah Goordas, who was about to become the head of the Brahmins of Bengal. The sheriff withdrew, greatly agitated by what had passed, and Nuncomar sat composedly down to write notes and examine accounts.

The next morning, before the sun was in his power, an immense concourse assembled round the place where the gallows had been set up. Grief and horror were on every face; yet to the last the multitude could hardly believe that the English really purposed to take the life of the great Brahmin. At length the mournful procession came through the crowd. Nuncomar sat up in his palanquin, and looked round him with unaltered serenity. He had just parted from those who were most nearly connected with him. Their cries and contortions had appalled the European ministers of justice, but had not produced the smallest effect on the

iron stoicism of the prisoner. The only anxiety which he expressed was that men of his own priestly caste might be in attendance to take charge of his corpse. He again desired to be remembered to his friends in the Council, mounted the scaffold with firmness, and gave the signal to the executioner. The moment that the drop fell, a howl of sorrow and despair rose from the innumerable spectators. Hundreds turned away their faces from the polluting sight, fled with loud wailings towards the Hoogly, and plunged into its holy waters, as if to purify themselves from the guilt of having looked on such a crime.

These feelings were not confined to Calcutta. The whole province was greatly excited; and the population of Dacca, in particular, gave strong signs of grief and dismay.

Of Impey's conduct it is impossible to speak too severely. We have already said that, in our opinion, he acted unjustly in refusing to respite Nuncomar. No rational man can doubt that he took this course in order to gratify the Governor-general. If we had ever had any doubts on that point, they would have been dispelled by a letter which Mr. Gleig has published. Hastings, three or four years later, described Impey as the man "to whose support he was at one time indebted for the safety of his fortune, honor, and reputation." These strong words can refer only to the case of Nuncomar; and they must mean that Impey hanged Nuncomar in order to support Hastings. It is, therefore, our deliberate opinion that Impey, sitting as a judge, put a man unjustly to death in order to serve a political purpose.

But we look on the conduct of Hastings in a some-

what different light. He was struggling for fortune, honor, liberty, all that makes life valuable. He was beset by rancorous and unprincipled enemies. From his colleagues he could expect no justice. He cannot be blamed for wishing to crush his accusers. He was, indeed, bound to use only legitimate means for that end. But it was not strange that he should have thought any means legitimate which were pronounced legitimate by the sages of the law, by men whose peculiar duty it was to deal justly between adversaries, and whose education might be supposed to have peculiarly qualified them for the discharge of that duty. Nobody demands from a party the unbending equity of a judge. The reason that judges are appointed is, that even a good man cannot be trusted to decide a cause in which he is himself concerned. Not a day passes on which an honest prosecutor does not ask for what none but a dishonest tribunal would grant. It is too much to expect that any man, when his dearest interests are at stake and his strongest passions excited, will, as against himself, be more just than the sworn dispensers of justice. To take an analogous case from the history of our own island: suppose that Lord Stafford, when in the Tower on suspicion of being concerned in the Popish Plot, had been apprised that Titus Oates had done something which might, by a questionable construction, be brought under the head of felony. Should we severely blame Lord Stafford, in the supposed case, for causing a prosecution to be instituted, for furnishing funds, for using all his influence to intercept the mercy of the Crown? We think not. If a judge, indeed, from favor to the Catholic lords, were to strain the law in order to hang Oates, such a

judge would richly deserve impeachment. But it does not appear to us that the Catholic lord, by bringing the case before the judge for decision, would materially overstep the limits of a just self-defence.

While, therefore, we have not the least doubt that this memorable execution is to be attributed to Hastings, we doubt whether it can with justice be reckoned among his crimes. That his conduct was dictated by a profound policy is evident. He was in a minority in Council. It was possible that he might long be in a minority. He knew the native character well. He knew in what abundance accusations are certain to flow in against the most innocent inhabitant of India who is under the frown of power. There was not in the whole black population of Bengal a place-holder, a place-hunter, a government tenant, who did not think that he might better himself by sending up a deposition against the Governor-general. Under these circumstances, the persecuted statesman resolved to teach the whole crew of accusers and witnesses that, though in a minority at the Council-board, he was still to be feared. The lesson which he gave them was, indeed, a lesson not to be forgotten. The head of the combination which had been formed against him, the richest, the most powerful, the most artful of the Hindoos, distinguished by the favor of those who then held the government, fenced round by the superstitious reverence of millions, was hanged in broad day before many thousands of people. Everything that could make the warning impressive—dignity in the sufferer, solemnity in the proceeding—was found in this case. The helpless rage and vain struggles of the Council made the triumph more signal. From that moment the convic-

tion of every native was that it was safer to take the part of Hastings in a minority than that of Francis in a majority, and that he who was so venturous as to join in running down the Governor-general might chance, in the phrase of the Eastern poet, to find a tiger while beating the jungle for a deer. The voices of a thousand informers were silenced in an instant. From that time, whatever difficulties Hastings might have to encounter, he was never molested by accusations from natives of India.

It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the letters of Hastings to Dr. Johnson bears date a very few hours after the death of Nuncomar. While the whole settlement was in commotion, while a mighty and ancient priesthood were weeping over the remains of their chief, the conqueror in that deadly grapple sat down, with characteristic self-possession, to write about the Tour to the Hebrides, Jones's Persian Grammar, and the history, traditions, arts, and natural productions of India.

In the meantime, intelligence of the Rohilla war, and of the first disputes between Hastings and his colleagues, had reached London. The Directors took part with the majority, and sent out a letter filled with severe reflections on the conduct of Hastings. They condemned, in strong but just terms, the iniquity of undertaking offensive wars merely for the sake of pecuniary advantages. But they utterly forgot that, if Hastings had by illicit means obtained pecuniary advantages, he had done so, not for his own benefit, but in order to meet their demands. To enjoin honesty, and to insist on having what could not be honestly got, was then the constant practice of the Company. As

Lady Macbeth says of her husband, they "would not play false, and yet would wrongly win."

The Regulating Act, by which Hastings had been appointed Governor-general for five years, empowered the Crown to remove him on an address from the Company. Lord North was desirous to procure such an address. The three members of Council who had been sent out from England were men of his own choice. General Clavering, in particular, was supported by a large parliamentary connection, such as no cabinet could be inclined to disoblige. The wish of the Minister was to displace Hastings, and to put Clavering at the head of the government. In the Court of Directors parties were very nearly balanced. Eleven voted against Hastings; ten for him. The Court of Proprietors was then convened. The great saleroom presented a singular appearance. Letters had been sent by the Secretary of the Treasury, exhorting all the supporters of government who held India stock to be in attendance. Lord Sandwich marshalled the friends of the administration with his usual dexterity and alertness. Fifty peers and privy-councillors, seldom seen so far eastward, were counted in the crowd. The debate lasted till midnight. The opponents of Hastings had a small superiority on the division; but a ballot was demanded; and the result was that the Governor-general triumphed by a majority of above a hundred votes over the combined efforts of the Directors and the Cabinet. The ministers were greatly exasperated by this defeat. Even Lord North lost his temper, no ordinary occurrence with him, and threatened to convoke Parliament before Christmas, and to bring in a bill for depriving the Company of all political power, and for

restricting it to its old business of trading in silks and teas.

Colonel Macleane, who through all this conflict had zealously supported the cause of Hastings, now thought that his employer was in imminent danger of being turned out, branded with parliamentary censure, perhaps prosecuted. The opinion of the crown lawyers had already been taken respecting some parts of the Governor-general's conduct. It seemed to be high time to think of securing an honorable retreat. Under these circumstances, Macleane thought himself justified in producing the resignation with which he had been intrusted. The instrument was not in very accurate form ; but the Directors were too eager to be scrupulous. They accepted the resignation, fixed on Mr. Wheler, one of their own body, to succeed Hastings, and sent out orders that General Clavering, as senior member of Council, should exercise the functions of Governor-general till Mr. Wheeler should arrive.

But, while these things were passing in England, a great change had taken place in Bengal. Monson was no more. Only four members of the government were left. Clavering and Francis were on one side, Barwell and the Governor-general on the other ; and the Governor-general had the casting vote. Hastings, who had been during two years destitute of all power and patronage, became at once absolute. He instantly proceeded to retaliate on his adversaries. Their measures were reversed ; their creatures were displaced. A new valuation of the lands of Bengal, for the purposes of taxation, was ordered ; and it was provided that the whole inquiry should be conducted by the Governor-general, and that all the letters relating to it should

run in his name. He began, at the same time, to revolve vast plans of conquest and dominion—plans which he lived to see realized, though not by himself. His project was to form subsidiary alliances with the native princes, particularly with those of Oude and Berar, and thus to make Britain the paramount power in India. While he was meditating these great designs arrived the intelligence that he had ceased to be Governor-general, that his resignation had been accepted, that Wheler was coming out immediately, and that, till Wheler arrived, the chair was to be filled by Clavering.

Had Hastings still been in a minority, he would probably have retired without a struggle ; but he was now the real master of British India, and he was not disposed to quit his high place. He asserted that he had never given any instructions which could warrant the steps taken at home. What his instructions had been, he owned he had forgotten. If he had kept a copy of them, he had mislaid it. But he was certain that he had repeatedly declared to the Directors that he would not resign. He could not see how the court, possessed of that declaration from himself, could receive his resignation from the doubtful hands of an agent. If the resignation were invalid, all the proceedings which were founded on that resignation were null, and Hastings was still Governor-general.

He afterwards affirmed that, though his agents had not acted in conformity with his instructions, he would nevertheless have held himself bound by their acts if Clavering had not attempted to seize the supreme power by violence. Whether this assertion were or were not true, it cannot be doubted that the imprudence of

Clavering gave Hastings an advantage. The General sent for the keys of the fort and of the treasury, took possession of the records, and held a council at which Francis attended. Hastings took the chair in another apartment, and Barwell sat with him. Each of the two parties had a plausible show of right. There was no authority entitled to their obedience within fifteen thousand miles. It seemed that there remained no way of settling the dispute except an appeal to arms ; and from such an appeal Hastings, confident of his influence over his countrymen in India, was not inclined to shrink. He directed the officers of the garrison of Fort William and of all the neighboring stations to obey no orders but his. At the same time, with admirable judgment, he offered to submit the case to the Supreme Court, and to abide by its decision. By making this proposition he risked nothing ; yet it was a proposition which his opponents could hardly reject. Nobody could be treated as a criminal for obeying what the judges should solemnly pronounce to be the lawful government. The boldest man would shrink from taking arms in defence of what the judges should pronounce to be usurpation. Clavering and Francis, after some delay, unwillingly consented to abide by the award of the court. The court pronounced that the resignation was invalid, and that therefore Hastings was still Governor-general under the Regulating Act ; and the defeated members of the Council, finding that the sense of the whole settlement was against them, acquiesced in the decision.

About this time arrived the news that, after a suit which had lasted several years, the Franconian courts had decreed a divorce between Imhoff and his wife.

The Baron left Calcutta, carrying with him the means of buying an estate in Saxony. The lady became Mrs. Hastings. The event was celebrated by great festivities; and all the most conspicuous persons at Calcutta, without distinction of parties, were invited to the Government-house. Clavering, as the Mahometan chronicler tells the story, was sick in mind and body, and excused himself from joining the splendid assembly. But Hastings, whom, as it should seem, success in ambition and in love had put into high good-humor, would take no denial. He went himself to the General's house, and at length brought his vanquished rival in triumph to the gay circle which surrounded the bride. The exertion was too much for a frame broken by mortification as well as by disease. Clavering died a few days later.

Wheler, who came out expecting to be Governor-general, and was forced to content himself with a seat at the Council-board, generally voted with Francis. But the Governor-general, with Barwell's help and his own casting vote, was still the master. Some change took place at this time in the feeling both of the Court of Directors and of the ministers of the Crown. All designs against Hastings were dropped; and, when his original term of five years had expired, he was quietly reappointed. The truth is, that the fearful dangers to which the public interests in every quarter were now exposed made both Lord North and the Company unwilling to part with a Governor whose talents, experience, and resolution, enmity itself was compelled to acknowledge.

The crisis was indeed formidable. That great and victorious empire on the throne of which George the

Third had taken his seat eighteen years before, with brighter hopes than had attended the accession of any of the long line of English sovereigns, had, by the most senseless misgovernment, been brought to the verge of ruin. In America millions of Englishmen were at war with the country from which their blood, their language, their religion, and their institutions were derived, and to which, but a short time before, they had been as strongly attached as the inhabitants of Norfolk and Leicestershire. The great powers of Europe, humbled to the dust by the vigor and genius which had guided the councils of George the Second, now rejoiced in the prospect of a signal revenge. The time was approaching when our island, while struggling to keep down the United States of America, and pressed with a still nearer danger by the too just discontents of Ireland, was to be assailed by France, Spain, and Holland, and to be threatened by the armed neutrality of the Baltic ; when even our maritime supremacy was to be in jeopardy; when hostile fleets were to command the Straits of Calpe and the Mexican Sea ; when the British flag was to be scarcely able to protect the British Channel. Great as were the faults of Hastings, it was happy for our country that at that conjuncture, the most terrible through which she has ever passed, he was the ruler of her Indian dominions.

An attack by sea on Bengal was little to be apprehended. The danger was that the European enemies of England might form an alliance with some native power, might furnish that power with troops, arms, and ammunition, and might thus assail our possessions on the side of the land. It was chiefly from the Mahrattas that Hastings anticipated danger. The original seat

of that singular people was the wild range of hills which runs along the western coast of India. In the reign of Aurungzebe the inhabitants of those regions, led by the great Sevajee, began to descend on the possessions of their wealthier and less warlike neighbors. The energy, ferocity, and cunning of the Mahrattas soon made them the most conspicuous among the new powers which were generated by the corruption of the decaying monarchy. At first they were only robbers. They soon rose to the dignity of conquerors. Half the provinces of the empire were turned into Mahratta principalities. Freebooters, sprung from low castes, and accustomed to menial employments, became mighty rajahs. The Bonslas, at the head of a band of plunderers, occupied the vast region of Berar. The Guicowar, which is, being interpreted, the Herdsman, founded that dynasty which still reigns in Guzerat. The houses of Scindia and Holkar waxed great in Malwa. One adventurous captain made his nest on the impregnable rock of Gooti. Another became the lord of the thousand villages which are scattered among the green rice-fields of Tanjore.

That was the time, throughout India, of double government. The form and the power were everywhere separated. The Mussulman nabobs who had become sovereign princes, the Vizier in Oude and the Nizam at Hyderabad, still called themselves the viceroys of the House of Tamerlane. In the same manner the Mahratta states, though really independent of each other, pretended to be members of one empire. They all acknowledged, by words and ceremonies, the supremacy of the heir of Sevajee—a *roi fainéant* who chewed bang and toyed with dancing-girls in a state-

prison at Sattara—and of his Peshwa, or mayor of the palace, a great hereditary magistrate who kept a court with kingly state at Poonah, and whose authority was obeyed in the spacious provinces of Aurungabad and Bejapoor.

Some months before war was declared in Europe, the government of Bengal was alarmed by the news that a French adventurer, who passed for a man of quality, had arrived at Poonah. It was said that he had been received there with great distinction, that he had delivered to the Peshwa letters and presents from Louis the Sixteenth, and that a treaty hostile to England had been concluded between France and the Mahrattas.

Hastings immediately resolved to strike the first blow. The title of the Peshwa was not undisputed. A portion of the Mahratta nation was favorable to a pretender. The Governor-general determined to espouse this pretender's interest, to move an army across the peninsula of India, and to form a close alliance with the chief of the House of Bonsla, who ruled Berar, and who, in power and dignity, was inferior to none of the Mahratta princes.

The army had marched, and the negotiations with Berar were in progress, when a letter from the English consul at Cairo brought the news that war had been proclaimed both in London and Paris. All the measures which the crisis required were adopted without a moment's delay. The French factories in Bengal were seized. Orders were sent to Madras that Pondicherry should instantly be occupied. Near Calcutta, works were thrown up which were thought to render the approach of a hostile force impossible. A maritime establishment was formed for the defence of the river. Nine

new battalions of Sepoys were raised, and a corps of native artillery was formed out of the hardy Lascars of the Bay of Bengal. Having made these arrangements, the Governor-general with calm confidence pronounced his presidency secure from all attack, unless the Mahrattas should march against it in conjunction with the French.

The expedition which Hastings had sent westward was not so speedily or completely successful as most of his undertakings. The commanding officer procrastinated. The authorities at Bombay blundered. But the Governor-general persevered. A new commander repaired the errors of his predecessor. Several brilliant actions spread the military renown of the English through regions where no European flag had ever been seen. It is probable that if a new and more formidable danger had not compelled Hastings to change his whole policy, his plans respecting the Mahratta empire would have been carried into complete effect.

The authorities in England had wisely sent out to Bengal, as commander of the forces and member of the Council, one of the most distinguished soldiers of that time. Sir Eyre Coote had, many years before, been conspicuous among the founders of the British empire in the East. At the council of war which preceded the battle of Plassey, he earnestly recommended, in opposition to the majority, that daring course which, after some hesitation, was adopted, and which was crowned with such splendid success. He subsequently commanded in the South of India against the brave and unfortunate Lally, gained the decisive battle of Wandewash over the French and their native allies, took Pondicherry, and made the English power supreme in

the Carnatic. Since those great exploits near twenty years had elapsed. Coote had no longer the bodily activity which he had shown in earlier days ; nor was the vigor of his mind altogether unimpaired. He was capricious and fretful, and required much coaxing to keep him in good-humor. It must, we fear, be added that the love of money had grown upon him, and that he thought more about his allowances, and less about his duties, than might have been expected from so eminent a member of so noble a profession. Still he was perhaps the ablest officer that was then to be found in the British army. Among the native soldiers his name was great and his influence unrivalled. Nor is he yet forgotten by them. Now and then a white-bearded old Sepoy may still be found who loves to talk of Porto Novo and Pollilore. It is but a short time since one of those aged men came to present a memorial to an English officer who holds one of the highest employments in India. A print of Coote hung in the room. The veteran recognized at once that face and figure which he had not seen for more than half a century, and, forgetting his salam to the living, halted, drew himself up, lifted his hand, and with solemn reverence paid his military obeisance to the dead.

Coote, though he did not, like Barwell, vote constantly with the Governor-general, was by no means inclined to join in systematic opposition, and on most questions concurred with Hastings, who did his best, by assiduous courtship, and by readily granting the most exorbitant allowances, to gratify the strongest passions of the old soldier.

It seemed likely at this time that a general reconciliation would put an end to the quarrels which had,

during some years, weakened and disgraced the government of Bengal. The dangers of the empire might well induce men of patriotic feeling—and of patriotic feeling neither Hastings nor Francis was destitute—to forget private enmities, and to co-operate heartily for the general good. Coote had never been concerned in faction. Wheler was thoroughly tired of it. Barwell had made an ample fortune; and, though he had promised that he would not leave Calcutta while his help was needed in Council, was most desirous to return to England, and exerted himself to promote an arrangement which would set him at liberty. A compact was made by which Francis agreed to desist from opposition; and Hastings engaged that the friends of Francis should be admitted to a fair share of the honors and emoluments of the service. During a few months after this treaty there was apparent harmony at the Council-board.

Harmony, indeed, was never more necessary, for at this moment internal calamities more formidable than war itself menaced Bengal. The authors of the Regulating Act of 1773 had established two independent powers, the one judicial, the other political; and, with a carelessness scandalously common in English legislation, had omitted to define the limits of either. The judges took advantage of the indistinctness, and attempted to draw to themselves supreme authority, not only within Calcutta, but through the whole of the great territory subject to the presidency of Fort William. There are few Englishmen who will not admit that the English law, in spite of modern improvements, is neither so cheap nor so speedy as might be wished. Still, it is a system which has grown up among us. In

some points, it has been fashioned to suit our feelings ; in others, it has gradually fashioned our feelings to suit itself. Even to its worst evils we are accustomed; and therefore, though we may complain of them, they do not strike us with the horror and dismay which would be produced by a new grievance of smaller severity. In India the case is widely different. English law, transplanted to that country, has all the vices from which we suffer here ; it has them all in a far higher degree ; and it has other vices, compared with which the worst vices from which we suffer are trifles. Dilatory here, it is far more dilatory in a land where the help of an interpreter is needed by every judge and by every advocate. Costly here, it is far more costly in a land into which the legal practitioners must be imported from an immense distance. All English labor in India, from the labor of the Governor-general and the Commander-in-chief down to that of a groom or a watchmaker, must be paid for at a higher rate than at home. No man will be banished, and banished to the torrid zone, for nothing. The rule holds good with respect to the legal profession. No English barrister will work, fifteen thousand miles from all his friends, with the thermometer at ninety-six in the shade, for the emoluments which will content him in chambers that overlook the Thames. Accordingly, the fees at Calcutta are about three times as great as the fees of Westminster Hall ; and this, though the people of India are, beyond all comparison, poorer than the people of England. Yet the delay and the expense, grievous as they are, form the smallest part of the evil which English law, imported without modifications into India, could not fail to produce. The strongest feelings of

our nature—honor, religion, female modesty—rose up against the innovation. Arrest on mesne process was the first step in most civil proceedings; and to a native of rank arrest was not merely a restraint, but a foul personal indignity. Oaths were required in every stage of every suit ; and the feeling of a Quaker about an oath is hardly stronger than that of a respectable native. That the apartments of a woman of quality should be entered by strange men, or that her face should be seen by them, are, in the East, intolerable outrages—outrages which are more dreaded than death, and which can be expiated only by the shedding of blood. To these outrages the most distinguished families of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa were now exposed. Imagine what the state of our own country would be if a jurisprudence were on a sudden introduced among us which should be to us what our jurisprudence was to our Asiatic subjects. Imagine what the state of our country would be if it were enacted that any man, by merely swearing that a debt was due to him, should acquire a right to insult the persons of men of the most honorable and sacred callings and of women of the most shrinking delicacy, to horsewhip a general officer, to put a bishop in the stocks, to treat ladies in the way which called forth the blow of Wat Tyler. Something like this was the effect of the attempt which the Supreme Court made to extend its jurisdiction over the whole of the Company's territory.

A reign of terror began, of terror heightened by mystery ; for even that which was endured was less horrible than that which was anticipated. No man knew what was next to be expected from this strange tribunal. It came from beyond the black water, as the

people of India, with mysterious horror, call the sea. It consisted of judges not one of whom was familiar with the usages of the millions over whom they claimed boundless authority. Its records were kept in unknown characters ; its sentences were pronounced in unknown sounds. It had already collected round itself an army of the worst part of the native population—informers, and false witnesses, and common barrators, and agents of chicane, and, above all, a banditti of bailiffs' followers, compared with whom the retainers of the worst English sponging-houses, in the worst times, might be considered as upright and tender-hearted. Many natives highly considered among their countrymen were seized, hurried up to Calcutta, flung into the common jail, not for any crime even imputed, not for any debt that had been proved, but merely as a precaution till their cause should come to trial. There were instances in which men of the most venerable dignity, persecuted without a cause by extortioners, died of rage and shame in the gripe of the vile alguazils of Impey. The harems of noble Mahometans, sanctuaries respected in the East by governments which respected nothing else, were burst open by gangs of bailiffs. The Mussulmans, braver and less accustomed to submission than the Hindoos, sometimes stood on their defence ; and there were instances in which they shed their blood in the doorway while defending, sword in hand, the sacred apartments of their women. Nay, it seemed as if even the faint-hearted Bengalee, who had crouched at the feet of Surajah Dowlah, who had been mute during the administration of Vansittart, would at length find courage in despair. No Mahratta invasion had ever spread through the province such

dismay as this inroad of English lawyers. All the injustice of former oppressors, Asiatic and European, appeared as a blessing when compared with the justice of the Supreme Court.

Every class of the population, English and native, with the exception of the ravenous pettifoggers who fattened on the misery and terror of an immense community, cried out loudly against this fearful oppression. But the judges were immovable. If a bailiff was resisted, they ordered the soldiers to be called out. If a servant of the Company, in conformity with the orders of the government, withstood the miserable catchpoles who, with Impey's writs in their hands, exceeded the insolence and rapacity of gang-robbers, he was flung into prison for a contempt. The lapse of sixty years, the virtue and wisdom of many eminent magistrates who have during that time administered justice in the Supreme Court, have not effaced from the minds of the people of Bengal the recollection of those evil days.

The members of the government were, on this subject, united as one man. Hastings had courted the judges ; he had found them useful instruments. But he was not disposed to make them his own masters or the masters of India. His mind was large ; his knowledge of the native character most accurate. He saw that the system pursued by the Supreme Court was degrading to the government and ruinous to the people ; and he resolved to oppose it manfully. The consequence was that the friendship, if that be the proper word for such a connection, which had existed between him and Impey was for a time completely dissolved. The government placed itself firmly between the tyran-

nical tribunal and the people. The Chief-justice proceeded to the wildest excesses. The Governor-general and all the members of Council were served with writs, calling on them to appear before the King's justices, and to answer for their public acts. This was too much. Hastings, with just scorn, refused to obey the call, set at liberty the persons wrongfully detained by the Court, and took measures for resisting the outrageous proceedings of the sheriff's officers, if necessary, by the sword. But he had in view another device which might prevent the necessity of an appeal to arms. He was seldom at a loss for an expedient ; and he knew Impey well. The expedient in this case was a very simple one, neither more nor less than a bribe. Impey was, by act of Parliament, a judge, independent of the government of Bengal, and entitled to a salary of eight thousand a year. Hastings proposed to make him also a judge in the Company's service, removable at the pleasure of the government of Bengal ; and to give him, in that capacity, about eight thousand a year more. It was understood that, in consideration of this new salary, Impey would desist from urging the high pretensions of his court. If he did urge these pretensions, the government could, at a moment's notice, eject him from the new place which had been created for him. The bargain was struck ; Bengal was saved ; an appeal to force was averted ; and the Chief-justice was rich, quiet, and infamous.

Of Impey's conduct it is unnecessary to speak. It was of a piece with almost every part of his conduct that comes under the notice of history. No other such judge has dishonored the English ermine since Jeffreys drank himself to death in the Tower. But we cannot

agree with those who have blamed Hastings for this transaction. The case stood thus: The negligent manner in which the Regulating Act had been framed put it in the power of the Chief-justice to throw a great country into the most dreadful confusion. He was determined to use his power to the utmost unless he was paid to be still; and Hastings consented to pay him. The necessity was to be deplored. It is also to be deplored that pirates should be able to exact ransom by threatening to make their captives walk the plank. But to ransom a captive from pirates has always been held a humane and Christian act; and it would be absurd to charge the payer of the ransom with corrupting the virtue of the corsair. This, we seriously think, is a not unfair illustration of the relative position of Impey, Hastings, and the people of India. Whether it was right in Impey to demand or to accept a price for powers which, if they really belonged to him, he could not abdicate, which, if they did not belong to him, he ought never to have usurped, and which in neither case he could honestly sell, is one question. It is quite another question whether Hastings was not right to give any sum, however large, to any man, however worthless, rather than either surrender millions of human beings to pillage or rescue them by civil war.

Francis strongly opposed this arrangement. It may, indeed, be suspected that personal aversion to Impey was as strong a motive with Francis as regard for the welfare of the province. To a mind burning with resentment, it might seem better to leave Bengal to the oppressors than to redeem it by enriching them. It is not improbable, on the other hand, that Hastings may have been the more willing to resort to an expedient agree-

able to the Chief-justice because that high functionary had already been so serviceable, and might, when existing dissensions were composed, be serviceable again.

But it was not on this point alone that Francis was now opposed to Hastings. The peace between them proved to be only a short and hollow truce, during which their mutual aversion was constantly becoming stronger. At length an explosion took place. Hastings publicly charged Francis with having deceived him, and with having induced Barwell to quit the service by insincere promises. Then came a dispute, such as frequently arises even between honorable men when they may make important agreements by mere verbal communication. An impartial historian will probably be of opinion that they had misunderstood each other ; but their minds were so much embittered that they imputed to each other nothing less than deliberate villany. "I do not," said Hastings, in a minute recorded on the Consultations of the Government—"I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candor, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honor." After the Council had risen, Francis put a challenge into the Governor-general's hand. It was instantly accepted. They met, and fired. Francis was shot through the body. He was carried to a neighboring house, where it appeared that the wound, though severe, was not mortal. Hastings inquired repeatedly after his enemy's health, and proposed to call on him ; but Francis coldly declined the visit. He had a proper sense, he said, of the Governor-general's politeness, but could not consent to any private interview. They could meet only at the Council-board.

In a very short time it was made signally manifest to how great a danger the Governor-general had on this occasion exposed his country. A crisis arrived with which he, and he alone, was competent to deal. It is not too much to say that, if he had been taken from the head of affairs, the years 1780 and 1781 would have been as fatal to our power in Asia as to our power in America.

The Mahrattas had been the chief objects of apprehension to Hastings. The measures which he had adopted for the purpose of breaking their power had at first been frustrated by the errors of those whom he was compelled to employ ; but his perseverance and ability seemed likely to be crowned with success, when a far more formidable danger showed itself in a distant quarter.

About thirty years before this time, a Mahometan soldier had begun to distinguish himself in the wars of Southern India. His education had been neglected ; his extraction was humble. His father had been a petty officer of revenue ; his grandfather a wandering dervis. But though thus meanly descended, though ignorant even of the alphabet, the adventurer had no sooner been placed at the head of a body of troops than he approved himself a man born for conquest and command. Among the crowd of chiefs who were struggling for a share of India, none could compare with him in the qualities of the captain and the statesman. He became a general ; he became a sovereign. Out of the fragments of old principalities which had gone to pieces in the general wreck he formed for himself a great, compact, and vigorous empire. That empire he ruled with the ability, severity, and vigilance of Louis

the Eleventh. Licentious in his pleasures, implacable in his revenge, he had yet enlargement of mind enough to perceive how much the prosperity of subjects adds to the strength of governments. He was an oppressor, but he had at least the merit of protecting his people against all oppression except his own. He was now in extreme old age, but his intellect was as clear and his spirit as high as in the prime of manhood. Such was the great Hyder Ali, the founder of the Mahometan kingdom of Mysore, and the most formidable enemy with whom the English conquerors of India have ever had to contend.

Had Hastings been governor of Madras, Hyder would have been either made a friend or vigorously encountered as an enemy. Unhappily the English authorities in the south provoked their powerful neighbor's hostility without being prepared to repel it. On a sudden an army of ninety thousand men, far superior in discipline and efficiency to any other native force that could be found in India, came pouring through those wild passes which, worn by mountain torrents and dark with jungle, lead down from the table-land of Mysore to the plains of the Carnatic. This great army was accompanied by a hundred pieces of cannon, and its movements were guided by many French officers trained in the best military schools of Europe.

Hyder was everywhere triumphant. The Sepoys in many British garrisons flung down their arms. Some forts were surrendered by treachery, and some by despair. In a few days the whole open country north of the Coleroon had submitted. The English inhabitants of Madras could already see by night, from the top of Mount St. Thomas, the eastern sky reddened by a vast

semicircle of blazing villages. The white villas to which our countrymen retire after the daily labors of government and of trade, when the cool evening breeze springs up from the bay, were now left without inhabitants; for bands of the fierce horsemen of Mysore had already been seen prowling among the tulip-trees and near the gay verandas. Even the town was not thought secure, and the British merchants and public functionaries made haste to crowd themselves behind the cannon of Fort St. George.

There were the means, indeed, of assembling an army which might have defended the presidency and even driven the invader back to his mountains. Sir Hector Munro was at the head of one considerable force; Baillie was advancing with another. United, they might have presented a formidable front even to such an enemy as Hyder. But the English commanders, neglecting those fundamental rules of the military art of which the propriety is obvious even to men who have never received a military education, deferred their junction, and were separately attacked. Baillie's detachment was destroyed. Munro was forced to abandon his baggage, to fling his guns into the tanks, and to save himself by a retreat which might be called a flight. In three weeks from the commencement of the war the British empire in Southern India had been brought to the verge of ruin. Only a few fortified places remained to us. The glory of our arms had departed. It was known that a great French expedition might soon be expected on the coast of Coromandel. England, beset by enemies on every side, was in no condition to protect such remote dependencies.

Then it was that the fertile genius and serene cour-

age of Hastings achieved their most signal triumph. A swift ship, flying before the southwest monsoon, brought the evil tidings in a few days to Calcutta. In twenty-four hours the Governor-general had formed a complete plan of policy adapted to the altered state of affairs. The struggle with Hyder was a struggle for life or death. All minor objects must be sacrificed to the preservation of the Carnatic. The disputes with the Mahrattas must be accommodated. A large military force and a supply of money must be instantly sent to Madras. But even these measures would be insufficient unless the war, hitherto so grossly mismanaged, were placed under the direction of a vigorous mind. It was no time for trifling. Hastings determined to resort to an extreme exercise of power—to suspend the incapable Governor of Fort St. George, to send Sir Eyre Coote to oppose Hyder, and to intrust that distinguished general with the whole administration of the war.

In spite of the sullen opposition of Francis, who had now recovered from his wound and had returned to the Council, the Governor-general's wise and firm policy was approved by the majority of the board. The reinforcements were sent off with great expedition, and reached Madras before the French armament arrived in the Indian seas. Coote, broken by age and disease, was no longer the Coote of Wandewash, but he was still a resolute and skilful commander. The progress of Hyder was arrested, and in a few months the great victory of Porto Novo retrieved the honor of the English arms.

In the meantime Francis had returned to England, and Hastings was now left perfectly unfettered.

Wheler had gradually been relaxing in his opposition, and, after the departure of his vehement and implacable colleague, co-operated heartily with the Governor-general, whose influence over the British in India, always great, had, by the vigor and success of his recent measures, been considerably increased.

But though the difficulties arising from factions within the Council were at an end, another class of difficulties had become more pressing than ever. The financial embarrassment was extreme. Hastings had to find the means not only of carrying on the government of Bengal, but of maintaining a most costly war against both Indian and European enemies in the Carnatic, and of making remittances to England. A few years before this time he had obtained relief by plundering the Mogul and enslaving the Rohillas; nor were the resources of his fruitful mind by any means exhausted.

His first design was on Benares, a city which in wealth, population, dignity, and sanctity was among the foremost of Asia. It was commonly believed that half a million of human beings was crowded into that labyrinth of lofty alleys, rich with shrines and minarets and balconies and carved oriels, to which the sacred apes clung by hundreds. The traveller could scarcely make his way through the press of holy mendicants and not less holy bulls. The broad and stately flights of steps which descended from these swarming haunts to the bathing-places along the Ganges were worn every day by the footsteps of an innumerable multitude of worshippers. The schools and temples drew crowds of pious Hindoos from every province where the Brahminical faith was known. Hundreds of devotees came

thither every month to die ; for it was believed that a peculiarly happy fate awaited the man who should pass from the sacred city into the sacred river. Nor was superstition the only motive which allured strangers to that great metropolis. Commerce had as many pilgrims as religion. All along the shores of the venerable stream lay great fleets of vessels laden with rich merchandise. From the looms of Benares went forth the most delicate silks that adorned the balls of St. James's and of Versailles, and in the bazaars the muslins of Bengal and the sabres of Oude were mingled with the jewels of Golconda and the shawls of Cashmere. This rich capital and the surrounding tract had long been under the immediate rule of a Hindoo prince who rendered homage to the Mogul emperors. During the great anarchy of India the lords of Benares became independent of the Court of Delhi, but were compelled to submit to the authority of the Nabob of Oude. Oppressed by this formidable neighbor, they invoked the protection of the English. The English protection was given ; and at length the Nabob Vizier, by a solemn treaty, ceded all his rights over Benares to the Company. From that time the Rajah was the vassal of the government of Bengal, acknowledged its supremacy, and engaged to send an annual tribute to Fort William. This tribute Cheyte Sing, the reigning prince, had paid with strict punctuality.

About the precise nature of the legal relation between the Company and the Rajah of Benares there has been much warm and acute controversy. On the one side it has been maintained that Cheyte Sing was merely a great subject on whom the superior power had a right to call for aid in the necessities of the empire. On the

other side it has been contended that he was an independent prince, that the only claim which the Company had upon him was for a fixed tribute, and that while the fixed tribute was regularly paid, as it assuredly was, the English had no more right to exact any further contribution from him than to demand subsidies from Holland or Denmark. Nothing is easier than to find precedents and analogies in favor of either view.

Our own impression is that neither view is correct. It was too much the habit of English politicians to take it for granted that there was in India a known and definite constitution by which questions of this kind were to be decided. The truth is that during the interval which elapsed between the fall of the House of Tamerlane and the establishment of the British ascendency there was no such constitution. The old order of things had passed away ; the new order of things was not yet formed. All was transition, confusion, obscurity. Everybody kept his head as he best might and scrambled for whatever he could get. There have been similar seasons in Europe. The time of the dissolution of the Carlovingian Empire is an instance. Who would think of seriously discussing the question what extent of pecuniary aid and of obedience Hugh Capet had a constitutional right to demand from the Duke of Brittany or the Duke of Normandy ? The words " constitutional right " had, in that state of society, no meaning. If Hugh Capet laid hands on all the possessions of the Duke of Normandy, this might be unjust and immoral ; but it would not be illegal in the sense in which the ordinances of Charles the Tenth were illegal. If, on the other hand, the Duke of Nor-

mandy made war on Hugh Capet, this might be unjust and immoral ; but it would not be illegal in the sense in which the expedition of Prince Louis Bonaparte was illegal.

Very similar to this was the state of India sixty years ago. Of the existing governments, not a single one could lay claim to legitimacy, or could plead any other title than recent occupation. There was scarcely a province in which the real sovereignty and the nominal sovereignty were not disjoined. Titles and forms were still retained which implied that the heir of Tamerlane was an absolute ruler, and that the nabobs of the provinces were his lieutenants. In reality he was a captive. The nabobs were in some places independent princes. In other places, as in Bengal and the Carnatic, they had, like their master, become mere phantoms, and the Company was supreme. Among the Mahrattas, again, the heir of Sevajee still kept the title of Rajah ; but he was a prisoner, and his Prime-minister, the Peshwa, had become the hereditary chief of the State. The Peshwa, in his turn, was fast sinking into the same degraded situation to which he had reduced the Rajah. It was, we believe, impossible to find, from the Himalayas to Mysore, a single government which was at once a government *de facto* and a government *de jure*, which possessed the physical means of making itself feared by its neighbors and subjects, and which had at the same time the authority derived from law and long prescription.

Hastings clearly discerned what was hidden from most of his contemporaries, that such a state of things gave immense advantages to a ruler of great talents and few scruples. In every international question that

could arise he had his option between the *de facto* ground and the *de jure* ground ; and the probability was that one of those grounds would sustain any claim that it might be convenient for him to make, and enable him to resist any claims made by others. In every controversy, accordingly, he resorted to the plea which suited his immediate purpose, without troubling himself in the least about consistency; and thus he scarcely ever failed to find what (to persons of short memories and scanty information) seemed to be a justification for what he wanted to do. Sometimes the Nabob of Bengal is a shadow, sometimes a monarch. Sometimes the Vizier is a mere deputy, sometimes an independent potentate. If it is expedient for the Company to show some legal title to the revenues of Bengal, the grant under the seal of the Mogul is brought forward as an instrument of the highest authority. When the Mogul asks for the rents which were reserved to him by that very grant, he is told that he is a mere pageant, that the English power rests on a very different foundation from a charter given by him ; that he is welcome to play at royalty as long as he likes, but that he must expect no tribute from the real masters of India.

It is true that it was in the power of others, as well as of Hastings, to practise this legerdemain ; but in the controversies of governments, sophistry is of little use unless it be backed by power. There is a principle which Hastings was fond of asserting in the strongest terms, and on which he acted with undeviating steadiness. It is a principle which, we must own, though it may be grossly abused, can hardly be disputed in the present state of public law. It is this, that where an ambiguous question arises between two governments,

there is, if they cannot agree, no appeal except to force, and that the opinion of the stronger must prevail. Almost every question was ambiguous in India. The English government was the strongest in India. The consequences are obvious. The English government might do exactly what it chose.

The English government now chose to wring money out of Cheyte Sing. It had formerly been convenient to treat him as a sovereign prince ; it was now convenient to treat him as a subject. Dexterity inferior to that of Hastings could easily find, in the general chaos of laws and customs, arguments for either course. Hastings wanted a great supply. It was known that Cheyte Sing had a large revenue, and it was suspected that he had accumulated a treasure. Nor was he a favorite at Calcutta. He had, when the Governor-general was in great difficulties, courted the favor of Francis and Clavering. Hastings, who (less, perhaps, from evil passions than from policy) seldom left an injury unpunished, was not sorry that the fate of Cheyte Sing should teach neighboring princes the same lesson which the fate of Nuncomar had already impressed on the inhabitants of Bengal.

In 1778, on the first breaking-out of the war with France, Cheyte Sing was called upon to pay, in addition to his fixed tribute, an extraordinary contribution of fifty thousand pounds. In 1779 an equal sum was exacted. In 1780 the demand was renewed. Cheyte Sing, in the hope of obtaining some indulgence, secretly offered the Governor-general a bribe of twenty thousand pounds. Hastings took the money, and his enemies have maintained that he took it intending to keep it. He certainly concealed the transaction for a time both

from the Council in Bengal and from the Directors at home ; nor did he ever give any satisfactory reason for the concealment. Public spirit or the fear of detection at last determined him to withstand the temptation. He paid over the bribe to the Company's treasury, and insisted that the Rajah should instantly comply with the demands of the English government. The Rajah, after the fashion of his countrymen, shuffled, solicited, and pleaded poverty. The grasp of Hastings was not to be so eluded. He added to the requisition another ten thousand pounds as a fine for delay, and sent troops to exact the money.

The money was paid. But this was not enough. The late events in the South of India had increased the financial embarrassments of the Company. Hastings was determined to plunder Cheyte Sing, and, for that end, to fasten a quarrel on him. Accordingly, the Rajah was now required to keep a body of cavalry for the service of the British government. He objected and evaded. This was exactly what the Governor-general wanted. He had now a pretext for treating the wealthiest of his vassals as a criminal. "I resolved" —these are the words of Hastings himself—"to draw from his guilt the means of relief of the Company's distresses, to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for past delinquency." The plan was simply this, to demand larger and larger contributions till the Rajah should be driven to remonstrate, then to call his remonstrance a crime, and to punish him by confiscating all his possessions.

Cheyte Sing was in the greatest dismay. He offered two hundred thousand pounds to propitiate the British government. But Hastings replied that nothing less

than half a million would be accepted. Nay, he began to think of selling Benares to Oude, as he had formerly sold Allahabad and Rohilcund. The matter was one which could not be well managed at a distance, and Hastings resolved to visit Benares.

Cheyte Sing received his liege lord with every mark of reverence, came near sixty miles, with his guards, to meet and escort the illustrious visitor, and expressed his deep concern at the displeasure of the English. He even took off his turban, and laid it in the lap of Hastings, a gesture which in India marks the most profound submission and devotion. Hastings behaved with cold and repulsive severity. Having arrived at Benares, he sent to the Rajah a paper containing the demands of the government of Bengal. The Rajah, in reply, attempted to clear himself from the accusations brought against him. Hastings, who wanted money and not excuses, was not to be put off by the ordinary artifices of Eastern negotiation. He instantly ordered the Rajah to be arrested and placed under the custody of two companies of Sepoys.

In taking these strong measures, Hastings scarcely showed his usual judgment. It is possible that, having had little opportunity of personally observing any part of the population of India except the Bengalees, he was not fully aware of the difference between their character and that of the tribes which inhabit the upper provinces. He was now in a land far more favorable to the vigor of the human frame than the Delta of the Ganges ; in a land fruitful of soldiers, who have been found worthy to follow English battalions to the charge and into the breach. The Rajah was popular among his subjects. His administration had been mild ; and

the prosperity of the district which he governed presented a striking contrast to the depressed state of Bahar under our rule, and a still more striking contrast to the misery of the provinces which were cursed by the tyranny of the Nabob Vizier. The national and religious prejudices with which the English were regarded throughout India were peculiarly intense in the metropolis of the Brahminical superstition. It can therefore scarcely be doubted that the Governor-general, before he outraged the dignity of Cheyte Sing by an arrest, ought to have assembled a force capable of bearing down all opposition. This had not been done. The handful of Sepoys who attended Hastings would probably have been sufficient to overawe Moorshedabad or the Black Town of Calcutta. But they were unequal to a conflict with the hardy rabble of Benares. The streets surrounding the palace were filled with an immense multitude, of whom a large proportion, as is usual in Upper India, wore arms. The tumult became a fight, and the fight a massacre. The English officers defended themselves with desperate courage against overwhelming numbers, and fell, as became them, sword in hand. The Sepoys were butchered. The gates were forced. The captive prince, neglected by his jailers during the confusion, discovered an outlet which opened on the precipitous bank of the Ganges, let himself down to the water by a string made of the turbans of his attendants, found a boat, and escaped to the opposite shore.

If Hastings had, by indiscreet violence, brought himself into a difficult and perilous situation, it is only just to acknowledge that he extricated himself with even more than his usual ability and presence of mind.

He had only fifty men with him. The building in which he had taken up his residence was on every side blockaded by the insurgents. But his fortitude remained unshaken. The Rajah, from the other side of the river, sent apologies and liberal offers. They were not even answered. Some subtle and enterprising men were found who undertook to pass through the throng of enemies, and to convey the intelligence of the late events to the English cantonments. It is the fashion of the natives of India to wear large ear-rings of gold. When they travel, the rings are laid aside, lest the precious metal should tempt some gang of robbers; and, in place of the ring, a quill or a roll of paper is inserted in the orifice to prevent it from closing. Hastings placed in the ears of his messengers letters rolled up in the smallest compass. Some of these letters were addressed to the commanders of the English troops. One was written to assure his wife of his safety. One was to the envoy whom he had sent to negotiate with the Mahrattas. Instructions for the negotiation were needed; and the Governor-general framed them, in that situation of extreme danger, with as much composure as if he had been writing in his palace at Calcutta.

Things, however, were not yet at the worst. An English officer of more spirit than judgment, eager to distinguish himself, made a premature attack on the insurgents beyond the river. His troops were entangled in narrow streets, and assailed by a furious population. He fell, with many of his men; and the survivors were forced to retire.

This event produced the effect which has never failed to follow every check, however slight, sustained

in India by the English arms. For hundreds of miles round, the whole country was in commotion. The entire population of the district of Benares took arms. The fields were abandoned by the husbandmen, who thronged to defend their prince. The infection spread to Oude. The oppressed people of that province rose up against the Nabob Vizier, refused to pay their imposts, and put the revenue officers to flight. Even Bahar was ripe for revolt. The hopes of Cheyte Sing began to rise. Instead of imploring mercy in the humble style of a vassal, he began to talk the language of a conqueror, and threatened, it was said, to sweep the white usurpers out of the land. But the English troops were now assembling fast. The officers, and even the private men, regarded the Governor-general with enthusiastic attachment, and flew to his aid with an alacrity which, as he boasted, had never been shown on any other occasion. Major Popham, a brave and skilful soldier, who had highly distinguished himself in the Mahratta war, and in whom the Governor-general reposed the greatest confidence, took the command. The tumultuary army of the Rajah was put to rout. His fastnesses were stormed. In a few hours about thirty thousand men left his standard and returned to their ordinary vocations. The unhappy prince fled from his country forever. His fair domain was added to the British dominions. One of his relations, indeed, was appointed Rajah ; but the Rajah of Benares was henceforth to be, like the Nabob of Bengal, a mere pensioner.

By this revolution an addition of two hundred thousand pounds a year was made to the revenues of the Company. But the immediate relief was not as great

as had been expected. The treasure laid up by Cheyte Sing had been popularly estimated at a million sterling. It turned out to be about a fourth part of that sum; and, such as it was, it was seized by the army and divided as prize-money.

Disappointed in his expectations from Benares, Hastings was more violent than he would otherwise have been in his dealings with Oude. Surajah Dowlah had long been dead. His son and successor, Asaph-ul-Dowlah, was one of the weakest and most vicious even of Eastern princes. His life was divided between torpid repose and the most odious forms of sensuality. In his court there was boundless waste, throughout his dominions wretchedness and disorder. He had been, under the skilful management of the English government, gradually sinking from the rank of an independent prince to that of a vassal of the Company. It was only by the help of a British brigade that he could be secure from the aggressions of neighbors who despised his weakness, and from the vengeance of subjects who detested his tyranny. A brigade was furnished; and he engaged to defray the charge of paying and maintaining it. From that time his independence was at an end. Hastings was not a man to lose the advantage which he had thus gained. The Nabob soon began to complain of the burden which he had undertaken to bear. His revenues, he said, were falling off; his servants were unpaid; he could no longer support the expense of the arrangement which he had sanctioned. Hastings would not listen to these representations. The Vizier, he said, had invited the government of Bengal to send him troops, and had promised to pay for them. The troops had been sent. How long the

troops were to remain in Oude was a matter not settled by the treaty. It remained, therefore, to be settled between the contracting parties. But the contracting parties differed. Who then must decide? The stronger.

Hastings also argued that if the English force was withdrawn, Oude would certainly become a prey to anarchy, and would probably be overrun by a Mahratta army. That the finances of Oude were embarrassed he admitted. But he contended, not without reason, that the embarrassment was to be attributed to the incapacity and vices of Asaph-ul-Dowlah himself; and that if less were spent on the troops, the only effect would be that more would be squandered on worthless favorites.

Hastings had intended, after settling the affairs of Benares, to visit Lucknow, and there to confer with Asaph-ul-Dowlah. But the obsequious courtesy of the Nabob Vizier prevented this visit. With a small train he hastened to meet the Governor-general. An interview took place in the fortress which, from the crest of the precipitous rock of Chunar, looks down on the waters of the Ganges.

At first sight it might appear impossible that the negotiations should come to an amicable close. Hastings wanted an extraordinary supply of money. Asaph-ul-Dowlah wanted to obtain a remission of what he already owed. Such a difference seemed to admit of no compromise. There was, however, one course satisfactory to both sides—one course by which it was possible to relieve the finances both of Oude and Bengal; and that course was adopted. It was simply this, that the Governor-general and the Nabob Vizier

should join to rob a third party ; and the third party whom they determined to rob was the parent of one of the robbers.

The mother of the late Nabob, and his wife, who was the mother of the present Nabob, were known as the Begums or Princesses of Oude. They had possessed great influence over Surajah Dowlah, and had, at his death, been left in possession of a splendid dotation. The domains of which they received the rents and administered the government were of wide extent. The treasure hoarded by the late Nabob, a treasure which was popularly estimated at near three millions sterling, was in their hands. They continued to occupy his favorite palace at Fyzabad, the Beautiful Dwelling ; while Asaph-ul-Dowlah held his court in the stately Lucknow, which he had built for himself on the shores of the Goomti, and had adorned with noble mosques and colleges.

Asaph-ul-Dowlah had already extorted considerable sums from his mother. She had at length appealed to the English ; and the English had interfered. A solemn compact had been made, by which she consented to give her son some pecuniary assistance, and he in his turn promised never to commit any further invasion of her rights. This compact was formally guaranteed by the government of Bengal. But times had changed ; money was wanted ; and the power which had given the guarantee was not ashamed to instigate the spoiler to excesses such that even he shrank from them.

It was necessary to find some pretext for a confiscation inconsistent not merely with plighted faith, not merely with the ordinary rules of humanity and justice,

but also with that great law of filial piety which, even in the wildest tribes of savages, even in those more degraded communities which wither under the influence of a corrupt half-civilization, retains a certain authority over the human mind. A pretext was the last thing that Hastings was likely to want. The insurrection at Benares had produced disturbances in Oude. These disturbances it was convenient to impute to the princesses. Evidence for the imputation there was scarcely any, unless reports wandering from one mouth to another, and gaining something by every transmission, may be called evidence. The accused were furnished with no charge ; they were permitted to make no defence ; for the Governor-general wisely considered that, if he tried them, he might not be able to find a ground for plundering them. It was agreed between him and the Nabob Vizier that the noble ladies should, by a sweeping act of confiscation, be stripped of their domains and treasures for the benefit of the Company, and that the sums thus obtained should be accepted by the government of Bengal in satisfaction of its claims on the government of Oude.

While Asaph-ul-Dowlah was at Chunar, he was completely subjugated by the clear and commanding intellect of the English statesman. But when they had separated, the Vizier began to reflect with uneasiness on the engagement into which he had entered. His mother and grandmother protested and implored. His heart, deeply corrupted by absolute power and licentious pleasures, yet not naturally unfeeling, failed him in this crisis. Even the English resident at Lucknow, though hitherto devoted to Hastings, shrank from extreme measures. But the Governor-general was in-

exorable. He wrote to the resident in terms of the greatest severity, and declared that, if the spoliation which had been agreed upon were not instantly carried into effect, he would himself go to Lucknow and do that from which feebler minds would recoil with dismay. The resident, thus menaced, waited on his Highness, and insisted that the treaty of Chunar should be carried into full and immediate effect. Asaph-ul-Dowlah yielded, making at the same time a solemn protestation that he yielded to compulsion. The lands were resumed ; but the treasure was not so easily obtained. It was necessary to use violence. A body of the Company's troops marched to Fyzabad, and forced the gates of the palace. The princesses were confined to their own apartments. But still they refused to submit. Some more stringent mode of coercion was to be found. A mode was found of which, even at this distance of time, we cannot speak without shame and sorrow.

There were at Fyzabad two ancient men belonging to that unhappy class which a practice of immemorial antiquity in the East has excluded from the pleasures of love and from the hope of posterity. It has always been held in Asiatic courts that beings thus estranged from sympathy with their kind are those whom princes may most safely trust. Surajah Dowlah had been of this opinion. He had given his entire confidence to the two eunuchs ; and after his death they remained at the head of the household of his widow.

These men were, by the orders of the British government, seized, imprisoned, ironed, starved almost to death, in order to extort money from the princesses. After they had been two months in confinement, their health gave way. They implored permission to take a

little exercise in the garden of their prison. The officer who was in charge of them stated that, if they were allowed this indulgence, there was not the least chance of their escaping, and that their irons really added nothing to the security of the custody in which they were kept. He did not understand the plan of his superiors. Their object in these inflictions was not security, but torture ; and all mitigation was refused. Yet this was not the worst. It was resolved by an English government that these two infirm old men should be delivered to the tormentors. For that purpose they were removed to Lucknow. What horrors their dungeon there witnessed can only be guessed. But there remains on the records of Parliament this letter, written by a British resident to a British soldier :

"Sir, the Nabob having determined to inflict corporal punishment upon the prisoners under your guard, this is to desire that his officers, when they shall come, may have free access to the prisoners, and be permitted to do with them as they shall see proper."

While these barbarities were perpetrated at Lucknow, the princesses were still under duress at Fyzabad. Food was allowed to enter their apartments only in such scanty quantities that their female attendants were in danger of perishing with hunger. Month after month this cruelty continued, till at length, after twelve hundred thousand pounds had been wrung out of the princesses, Hastings began to think that he had really got to the bottom of their coffers, and that no rigor could extort more. Then, at length, the wretched men who were retained at Lucknow regained their liberty. When their irons were knocked off, and the doors of their prison opened, their quivering lips, the tears

which ran down their cheeks, and the thanksgivings which they poured forth to the common Father of Mussulmans and Christians melted even the stout hearts of the English warriors who stood by.

But we must not forget to do justice to Sir Elijah Impey's conduct on this occasion. It was not, indeed, easy for him to intrude himself into a business so entirely alien from all his official duties. But there was something inexpressibly alluring, we must suppose, in the peculiar rankness of the infamy which was then to be got at Lucknow. He hurried thither as fast as relays of palanquin-bearers could carry him. A crowd of people came before him with affidavits against the Begums, ready drawn in their hands. Those affidavits he did not read. Some of them, indeed, he could not read ; for they were in the dialects of Northern India, and no interpreter was employed. He administered the oath to the deponents, with all possible expedition, and asked not a single question, not even whether they had perused the statements to which they swore. This work performed, he got again into his palanquin, and posted back to Calcutta, to be in time for the opening of term. The cause was one which, by his own confession, lay altogether out of his jurisdiction. Under the charter of justice, he had no more right to inquire into crimes committed by Asiatics in Oude than the Lord President of the Court of Session of Scotland to hold an assize at Exeter. He had no right to try the Begums, nor did he pretend to try them. With what object, then, did he undertake so long a journey? Evidently in order that he might give, in an irregular manner, that sanction which in a regular manner he could not give to the crimes of those who had recently

hired him ; and in order that a confused mass of testimony which he did not sift, which he did not even read, might acquire an authority not properly belonging to it from the signature of the highest judicial functionary in India.

The time was approaching, however, when he was to be stripped of that robe which has never, since the Revolution, been disgraced so foully as by him. The state of India had for some time occupied much of the attention of the British Parliament. Towards the close of the American war, two committees of the Commons sat on Eastern affairs. In one Edmund Burke took the lead. The other was under the presidency of the able and versatile Henry Dundas, then Lord Advocate of Scotland. Great as are the changes which, during the last sixty years, have taken place in our Asiatic dominions, the reports which those committees laid on the table of the House will still be found most interesting and instructive.

There was as yet no connection between the Company and either of the great parties in the State. The ministers had no motive to defend Indian abuses. On the contrary, it was for their interest to show, if possible, that the government and patronage of our Oriental empire might, with advantage, be transferred to themselves. The votes, therefore, which, in consequence of the reports made by the two committees, were passed by the Commons breathed the spirit of stern and indignant justice. The severest epithets were applied to several of the measures of Hastings, especially to the Rohilla war ; and it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Dundas, that the Company ought to recall a Governor-general who had brought such calamities on

the Indian people and such dishonor on the British name. An act was passed for limiting the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The bargain which Hastings had made with the Chief-justice was condemned in the strongest terms ; and an address was presented to the King, praying that Impey might be ordered home to answer for his misdeeds.

Impey was recalled by a letter from the Secretary of State. But the proprietors of India Stock resolutely refused to dismiss Hastings from their service, and passed a resolution affirming, what was undeniably true, that they were intrusted by law with the right of naming and removing their Governor-general, and that they were not bound to obey the directions of a single branch of the Legislature with respect to such nomination or removal.

Thus supported by his employers, Hastings remained at the head of the government of Bengal till the spring of 1785. His administration, so eventful and stormy, closed in almost perfect quiet. In the Council there was no regular opposition to his measures. Peace was restored to India. The Mahratta war had ceased. Hyder was no more. A treaty had been concluded with his son Tippoo ; and the Carnatic had been evacuated by the armies of Mysore. Since the termination of the American war, England had no European enemy or rival in the Eastern seas.

On a general view of the long administration of Hastings, it is impossible to deny that, against the great crimes by which it is blemished, we have to set off great public services. England had passed through a perilous crisis. She still, indeed, maintained her place in the foremost rank of European powers ; and

the manner in which she had defended herself against fearful odds had inspired surrounding nations with a high opinion both of her merit and of her strength. Nevertheless, in every part of the world except one she had been a loser. Not only had she been compelled to acknowledge the independence of thirteen colonies peopled by her children, and to conciliate the Irish by giving up the right of legislating for them, but, in the Mediterranean, in the Gulf of Mexico, on the coast of Africa, on the continent of America, she had been compelled to cede the fruits of her victories in former wars. Spain regained Minorca and Florida ; France regained Senegal, Goree, and several West Indian islands. The only quarter of the world in which Britain had lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings. In spite of the utmost exertions both of European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our country in the East had been greatly augmented. Benares was subjected ; the Nabob Vizier reduced to vassalage. That our influence had been thus extended—nay, that Fort William and Fort St. George had not been occupied by hostile armies—was owing, if we may trust the general voice of the English in India, to the skill and resolution of Hastings.

His internal administration, with all its blemishes, gives him a title to be considered as one of the most remarkable men in our history. He dissolved the double government. He transferred the direction of affairs to English hands. Out of a frightful anarchy he educed at least a rude and imperfect order. The whole organization by which justice was dispensed, revenue collected, peace maintained, throughout a ter-

ritory not inferior in population to the dominions of Louis the Sixteenth or of the Emperor Joseph, was formed and superintended by him. He boasted that every public office, without exception, which existed when he left Bengal was his creation. It is quite true that this system, after all the improvements suggested by the experience of sixty years, still needs improvement, and that it was at first far more defective than it now is. But whoever seriously considers what it is to construct from the beginning the whole of a machine so vast and complex as a government will allow that what Hastings effected deserves high admiration. To compare the most celebrated European ministers to him seems to us as unjust as it would be to compare the best baker in London with Robinson Crusoe, who, before he could bake a single loaf, had to make his plough and his harrow, his fences and his scarecrows, his sickle and his flail, his mill and his oven.

The just fame of Hastings rises still higher when we reflect that he was not bred a statesman ; that he was sent from school to a counting-house ; and that he was employed during the prime of his manhood as a commercial agent, far from all intellectual society.

Nor must we forget that all, or almost all, to whom, when placed at the head of affairs, he could apply for assistance were persons who owed as little as himself, or less than himself, to education. A minister in Europe finds himself, on the first day on which he commences his functions, surrounded by experienced public servants, the depositaries of official traditions. Hastings had no such help. His own reflection, his own energy, were to supply the place of all Downing Street and Somerset House. Having had no facilities for learn-

ing, he was forced to teach. He had first to form himself, and then to form his instruments ; and this not in a single department, but in all the departments of the administration.

It must be added that, while engaged in this most arduous task, he was constantly trammelled by orders from home, and frequently borne down by a majority in council. The preservation of an empire from a formidable combination of foreign enemies, the construction of a government in all its parts, were accomplished by him while every ship brought out bales of censure from his employers, and while the records of every consultation were filled with acrimonious minutes by his colleagues. We believe that there never was a public man whose temper was so severely tried ; not Marlborough, when thwarted by the Dutch deputies ; not Wellington, when he had to deal at once with the Portuguese Regency, the Spanish juntas, and Mr. Percival. But the temper of Hastings was equal to almost any trial. It was not sweet, but it was calm. Quick and vigorous as his intellect was, the patience with which he endured the most cruel vexations till a remedy could be found resembled the patience of stupidity. He seems to have been capable of resentment, bitter and long-enduring ; yet his resentment so seldom hurried him into any blunder that it may be doubted whether what appeared to be revenge was anything but policy.

The effect of this singular equanimity was that he always had the full command of all the resources of one of the most fertile minds that ever existed. Accordingly, no complication of perils and embarrassments could perplex him. For every difficulty he had a con-

trivance ready ; and, whatever may be thought of the justice and humanity of some of his contrivances, it is certain that they seldom failed to serve the purpose for which they were designed.

Together with this extraordinary talent for devising expedients, Hastings possessed, in a very high degree, another talent scarcely less necessary to a man in his situation ; we mean the talent for conducting political controversy. It is as necessary to an English statesman in the East that he should be able to write, as it is to a minister in this country that he should be able to speak. It is chiefly by the oratory of a public man here that the nation judges of his powers. It is from the letters and reports of a public man in India that the dispensers of patronage form their estimate of him. In each case, the talent which receives peculiar encouragement is developed, perhaps at the expense of the other powers. In this country, we sometimes hear men speak above their abilities. It is not very unusual to find gentlemen in the Indian service who write above their abilities. The English politician is a little too much of a debater ; the Indian politician a little too much of an essayist.

Of the numerous servants of the Company who have distinguished themselves as framers of minutes and despatches, Hastings stands at the head. He was, indeed, the person who gave to the official writing of the Indian governments the character which it still retains. He was matched against no common antagonist. But even Francis was forced to acknowledge, with sullen and resentful candor, that there was no contending against the pen of Hastings. And, in truth, the Governor-general's power of making out a case, of

perplexing what it was inconvenient that people should understand, and of setting in the clearest point of view whatever would bear the light, was incomparable. His style must be praised with some reservation. It was, in general, forcible, pure, and polished; but it was sometimes, though not often, turgid, and on one or two occasions even bombastic. Perhaps the fondness of Hastings for Persian literature may have tended to corrupt his taste.

And, since we have referred to his literary tastes, it would be most unjust not to praise the judicious encouragement which, as a ruler, he gave to liberal studies and curious researches. His patronage was extended, with prudent generosity, to voyages, travels, experiments, publications. He did little, it is true, towards introducing into India the learning of the West. To make the young natives of Bengal familiar with Milton and Adam Smith, to substitute the geography, astronomy, and surgery of Europe for the dotages of the Brahminical superstition, or for the imperfect science of ancient Greece transfused through Arabian expositions—this was a scheme reserved to crown the beneficent administration of a far more virtuous ruler. Still, it is impossible to refuse high commendation to a man who, taken from a ledger to govern an empire, overwhelmed by public business, surrounded by people as busy as himself, and separated by thousands of leagues from almost all literary society, gave, both by his example and by his munificence, a great impulse to learning. In Persian and Arabic literature he was deeply skilled. With the Sanscrit he was not himself acquainted; but those who first brought that language to the knowledge of European students owed much to

his encouragement. It was under his protection that the Asiatic Society commenced its honorable career. That distinguished body selected him to be its first president ; but, with excellent taste and feeling, he declined the honor in favor of Sir William Jones. But the chief advantage which the students of Oriental letters derived from his patronage remains to be mentioned. The Pundits of Bengal had always looked with great jealousy on the attempts of foreigners to pry into those mysteries which were locked up in the sacred dialect. The Brahminical religion had been persecuted by the Mahometans. What the Hindoos knew of the spirit of the Portuguese government might warrant them in apprehending persecution from Christians. That apprehension the wisdom and moderation of Hastings removed. He was the first foreign ruler who succeeded in gaining the confidence of the hereditary priests of India, and who induced them to lay open to English scholars the secrets of the old Brahminical theology and jurisprudence.

It is, indeed, impossible to deny that in the great art of inspiring large masses of human beings with confidence and attachment no ruler ever surpassed Hastings. If he had made himself popular with the English by giving up the Bengalese to extortion and oppression, or if, on the other hand, he had conciliated the Bengalese and alienated the English, there would have been no cause for wonder. What is peculiar to him is that, being the chief of a small band of strangers who exercised boundless power over a great indigenous population, he made himself beloved both by the subject many and by the dominant few. The affection felt for him by the civil service was singularly ardent and constant. Through

all his disasters and perils, his brethren stood by him with steadfast loyalty. The army, at the same time, loved him as armies have seldom loved any but the greatest chiefs who have led them to victory. Even in his disputes with distinguished military men, he could always count on the support of the military profession. While such was his empire over the hearts of his countrymen, he enjoyed among the natives a popularity such as other governors have perhaps better merited, but such as no other governor has been able to attain. He spoke their vernacular dialects with facility and precision. He was intimately acquainted with their feelings and usages. On one or two occasions, for great ends, he deliberately acted in defiance of their opinion ; but on such occasions he gained more in their respect than he lost in their love. In general, he carefully avoided all that could shock their national or religious prejudices. His administration was, indeed, in many respects faulty ; but the Bengalee standard of good government was not high. Under the nabobs, the hurricane of Mahratta cavalry had passed annually over the rich alluvial plain. But even the Mahratta shrank from a conflict with the mighty children of the sea ; and the immense rice-harvests of the Lower Ganges were safely gathered in, under the protection of the English sword. The first English conquerors had been more rapacious and merciless even than the Mahrattas ; but that generation had passed away. Defective as was the police, heavy as were the public burdens, it is probable that the oldest man in Bengal could not recollect a season of equal security and prosperity. For the first time within living memory, the province was placed under a government strong enough to pre-

vent others from robbing, and not inclined to play the robber itself. These things inspired good-will. At the same time, the constant success of Hastings and the manner in which he extricated himself from every difficulty made him an object of superstitious admiration ; and the more than regal splendor which he sometimes displayed dazzled a people who have much in common with children. Even now, after the lapse of more than fifty years, the natives of India still talk of him as the greatest of the English ; and nurses sing children to sleep with a jingling ballad about the fleet horses and richly caparisoned elephants of Sahib Warren Hostein.

The gravest offences of which Hastings was guilty did not affect his popularity with the people of Bengal ; for those offences were committed against neighboring states. Those offences, as our readers must have perceived, we are not disposed to vindicate ; yet, in order that the censure may be justly apportioned to the transgression, it is fit that the motive of the criminal should be taken into consideration. The motive which prompted the worst acts of Hastings was misdirected and ill-regulated public spirit. The rules of justice, the sentiments of humanity, the plighted faith of treaties, were in his view as nothing when opposed to the immediate interests of the State. This is no justification, according to the principles either of morality, or of what we believe to be identical with morality—namely, far-sighted policy. Nevertheless, the commonsense of mankind, which in questions of this sort seldom goes far wrong, will always recognize a distinction between crimes which originate in an inordinate zeal for the commonwealth, and crimes which originate in selfish

cupidity. To the benefit of this distinction Hastings is fairly entitled. There is, we conceive, no reason to suspect that the Rohilla war, the revolution of Benares, or the spoliation of the Princesses of Oude added a rupee to his fortune. We will not affirm that in all pecuniary dealings he showed that punctilious integrity, that dread of the faintest appearance of evil, which is now the glory of the Indian civil service. But when the school in which he had been trained and the temptations to which he was exposed are considered, we are more inclined to praise him for his general uprightness with respect to money than rigidly to blame him for a few transactions which would now be called indelicate and irregular, but which even now would hardly be designated as corrupt. A rapacious man he certainly was not. Had he been so, he would infallibly have returned to his country the richest subject in Europe. We speak within compass when we say that, without applying any extraordinary pressure, he might easily have obtained from the zemindars of the Company's provinces and from neighboring princes, in the course of thirteen years, more than three millions sterling, and might have outshone the splendor of Carlton House and of the Palais Royal. He brought home a fortune such as a Governor-general fond of state and careless of thrift might easily, during so long a tenure of office, save out of his legal salary. Mrs. Hastings, we are afraid, was less scrupulous. It was generally believed that she accepted presents with great alacrity, and that she thus formed, without the connivance of her husband, a private hoard amounting to several lacs of rupees. We are the more inclined to give credit to this story because Mr. Gleig, who cannot but have

heard it, does not, as far as we have observed, notice or contradict it.

The influence of Mrs. Hastings over her husband was, indeed, such that she might easily have obtained much larger sums than she was ever accused of receiving. At length her health began to give way; and the Governor-general, much against his will, was compelled to send her to England. He seems to have loved her with that love which is peculiar to men of strong minds, to men whose affection is not easily won or widely diffused. The talk of Calcutta ran for some time on the luxurious manner in which he fitted up the roundhouse of an Indiaman for her accommodation, on the profusion of sandal-wood and carved ivory which adorned her cabin, and on the thousands of rupees which had been expended in order to procure for her the society of an agreeable female companion during the voyage. We may remark here that the letters of Hastings to his wife are exceedingly characteristic. They are tender, and full of indications of esteem and confidence; but, at the same time, a little more ceremonious than is usual in so intimate a relation. The solemn courtesy with which he compliments "his elegant Marian" reminds us now and then of the dignified air with which Sir Charles Grandison bowed over Miss Byron's hand in the cedar parlor.

After some months, Hastings prepared to follow his wife to England. When it was announced that he was about to quit his office, the feeling of the society which he had so long governed manifested itself by many signs. Addresses poured in from Europeans and Asiatics, from civil functionaries, soldiers, and traders. On the day on which he delivered up the keys of office,

a crowd of friends and admirers formed a lane to the quay where he embarked. Several barges escorted him far down the river ; and some attached friends refused to quit him till the low coast of Bengal was fading from the view, and till the pilot was leaving the ship.

Of his voyage little is known, except that he amused himself with books and with his pen, and that among the compositions with which he beguiled the tediousness of that long leisure was a pleasing imitation of Horace's *Otium divos rogat.* This little poem was inscribed to Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, a man of whose integrity, humanity, and honor it is impossible to speak too highly; but who, like some other excellent members of the civil service, extended to the conduct of his friend Hastings an indulgence of which his own conduct never stood in need.

The voyage was, for those times, very speedy. Hastings was little more than four months on the sea. In June, 1785, he landed at Plymouth, posted to London, appeared at court, paid his respects in Leadenhall Street, and then retired with his wife to Cheltenham.

He was greatly pleased with his reception. The King treated him with marked distinction. The Queen, who had already incurred much censure on account of the favor which, in spite of the ordinary severity of her virtue, she had shown to the "elegant Marian," was not less gracious to Hastings. The Directors received him in a solemn sitting ; and their chairman read to him a vote of thanks which they had passed without one dissentient voice. "I find myself," said Hastings, in a letter written about a quarter of a year after his arrival in England—"I find myself everywhere, and universally, treated with evidences,

apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of my country."

The confident and exulting tone of his correspondence about this time is the more remarkable because he had already received ample notice of the attack which was in preparation. Within a week after he landed at Plymouth, Burke gave notice in the House of Commons of a motion seriously affecting a gentleman lately returned from India. The session, however, was then so far advanced that it was impossible to enter on so extensive and so important a subject.

Hastings, it is clear, was not sensible of the danger of his position. Indeed, that sagacity, that judgment, that readiness in devising expedients, which had distinguished him in the East seemed now to have forsaken him ; not that his abilities were at all impaired ; not that he was not still the same man who had triumphed over Francis and Nuncomar, who had made the Chief-justice and the Nabob Vizier his tools, who had deposed Cheyte Sing and repelled Hyder Ali. But an oak, as Mr. Grattan finely said, should not be transplanted at fifty. A man who, having left England when a boy, returns to it after thirty or forty years passed in India will find, be his talents what they may, that he has much both to learn and to unlearn before he can take a place among English statesmen. The working of a representative system, the war of parties, the arts of debate, the influence of the press, are startling novelties to him. Surrounded on every side by new machines and new tactics, he is as much bewildered as Hannibal would have been at Waterloo, or Themistocles at Trafalgar. His very acuteness deludes him. His very vigor causes him to stumble. The

more correct his maxims, when applied to the state of society to which he is accustomed, the more certain they are to lead him astray. This was strikingly the case with Hastings. In India he had a bad hand ; but he was master of the game, and he won every stake. In England he held excellent cards, if he had known how to play them ; and it was chiefly by his own errors that he was brought to the verge of ruin.

Of all his errors, the most serious was, perhaps, the choice of a champion. Clive, in similar circumstances, had made a singularly happy selection. He put himself into the hands of Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough, one of the few great advocates who have also been great in the House of Commons. To the defence of Clive, therefore, nothing was wanting—neither learning nor knowledge of the world, neither forensic acuteness nor that eloquence which charms political assemblies. Hastings intrusted his interests to a very different person, a major in the Bengal army, named Scott. This gentleman had been sent over from India some time before as the agent of the Governor-general. It was rumored that his services were rewarded with Oriental munificence ; and we believe that he received much more than Hastings could conveniently spare. The Major obtained a seat in Parliament, and was there regarded as the organ of his employer. It was evidently impossible that a gentleman so situated could speak with the authority which belongs to an independent position. Nor had the agent of Hastings the talents necessary for obtaining the ear of an assembly which, accustomed to listen to great orators, had naturally become fastidious. He was always on his legs ; he was very tedious ; and he had

only one topic, the merits and wrongs of Hastings. Everybody who knows the House of Commons will easily guess what followed. The Major was soon considered as the greatest bore of his time. His exertions were not confined to Parliament. There was hardly a day on which the newspapers did not contain some puff upon Hastings, signed *Asiaticus* or *Bengalensis*, but known to be written by the indefatigable Scott; and hardly a month in which some bulky pamphlet on the same subject, and from the same pen, did not pass to the trunk-makers and the pastry-cooks. As to this gentleman's capacity for conducting a delicate question through Parliament, our readers will want no evidence beyond that which they will find in letters preserved in these volumes. We will give a single specimen of his temper and judgment. He designated the greatest man then living as "that reptile Mr. Burke."

In spite, however, of this unfortunate choice, the general aspect of affairs was favorable to Hastings. The King was on his side. The Company and its servants were zealous in his cause. Among public men he had many ardent friends. Such were Lord Mansfield, who had outlived the vigor of his body, but not that of his mind; and Lord Lansdowne, who, though unconnected with any party, retained the importance which belongs to great talents and knowledge. The ministers were generally believed to be favorable to the late Governor-general. They owed their power to the clamor which had been raised against Mr. Fox's East India Bill. The authors of that bill, when accused of invading vested rights, and of setting up powers unknown to the Constitution, had defended themselves by pointing to the crimes of Hastings, and by arguing

that abuses so extraordinary justified extraordinary measures. Those who, by opposing that bill, had raised themselves to the head of affairs would naturally be inclined to extenuate the evils which had been made the plea for administering so violent a remedy ; and such, in fact, was their general disposition. The Lord Chancellor Thurlow, in particular, whose great place and force of intellect gave him a weight in the government inferior only to that of Mr. Pitt, espoused the cause of Hastings with indecorous violence. Mr. Pitt, though he had censured many parts of the Indian system, had studiously abstained from saying a word against the late chief of the Indian government. To Major Scott, indeed, the young minister had in private extolled Hastings as a great, a wonderful man, who had the highest claims on the government. There was only one objection to granting all that so eminent a servant of the public could ask. The resolution of censure still remained on the journals of the House of Commons. That resolution was, indeed, unjust ; but, till it was rescinded, could the minister advise the King to bestow any mark of approbation on the person censured ? If Major Scott is to be trusted, Mr. Pitt declared that this was the only reason which prevented the advisers of the Crown from conferring a peerage on the late Governor-general. Mr. Dundas was the only important member of the administration who was deeply committed to a different view of the subject. He had moved the resolution which created the difficulty; but even from him little was to be apprehended. Since he had presided over the committee on Eastern affairs, great changes had taken place. He was surrounded by new allies ; he had fixed his hopes on new

objects ; and whatever may have been his good qualities—and he had many—flattery itself never reckoned rigid consistency in the number.

From the ministry, therefore, Hastings had every reason to expect support ; and the ministry was very powerful. The Opposition was loud and vehement against him. But the Opposition, though formidable from the wealth and influence of some of its members, and from the admirable talents and eloquence of others, was outnumbered in Parliament and odious throughout the country. Nor, as far as we can judge, was the Opposition generally desirous to engage in so serious an undertaking as the impeachment of an Indian governor. Such an impeachment must last for years. It must impose on the chiefs of the party an immense load of labor. Yet it could scarcely, in any manner, affect the event of the great political game. The followers of the coalition were therefore more inclined to revile Hastings than to prosecute him. They lost no opportunity of coupling his name with the names of the most hateful tyrants of whom history makes mention. The wits of Brooks's aimed their keenest sarcasms both at his public and at his domestic life. Some fine diamonds which he had presented, as it was rumored, to the royal family, and a certain richly carved ivory bed which the Queen had done him the honor to accept from him, were favorite subjects of ridicule. One lively poet proposed that the great acts of the fair Marian's present husband should be immortalized by the pencil of his predecessor ; and that Imhoff should be employed to embellish the House of Commons with paintings of the bleeding Rohillas, of Nuncomar swinging, of Cheyte Sing letting himself down to the Ganges. Another,

in an exquisitely humorous parody of Virgil's third eclogue, propounded the question what that mineral could be of which the rays had power to make the most austere of princesses the friend of a wanton. A third described, with gay malevolence, the gorgeous appearance of Mrs. Hastings at St. James's—the galaxy of jewels, torn from Indian Begums, which adorned her head-dress, her necklace gleaming with future votes, and the depending questions that shone upon her ears. Satirical attacks of this description, and perhaps a motion for a vote of censure, would have satisfied the great body of the Opposition. But there were two men whose indignation was not to be so appeased—Philip Francis and Edmund Burke.

Francis had recently entered the House of Commons, and had already established a character there for industry and ability. He labored, indeed, under one most unfortunate defect, want of fluency. But he occasionally expressed himself with a dignity and energy worthy of the greatest orators. Before he had been many days in Parliament, he incurred the bitter dislike of Pitt, who constantly treated him with as much asperity as the laws of debate would allow. Neither lapse of years nor change of scene had mitigated the enmities which Francis had brought back from the East. After his usual fashion, he mistook his malevolence for virtue, nursed it, as preachers tell us that we ought to nurse our good dispositions, and paraded it, on all occasions, with Pharisaical ostentation.

The zeal of Burke was still fiercer ; but it was far purer. Men unable to understand the elevation of his mind have tried to find out some discreditable motive for the vehemence and pertinacity which he showed on

this occasion. But they have altogether failed. The idle story that he had some private slight to revenge has long been given up, even by the advocates of Hastings. Mr. Gleig supposes that Burke was actuated by party spirit, that he retained bitter remembrance of the fall of the coalition, that he attributed that fall to the exertions of the East India interest, and that he considered Hastings as the head and the representative of that interest. This explanation seems to be sufficiently refuted by a reference to dates. The hostility of Burke to Hastings commenced long before the coalition, and lasted long after Burke had become a strenuous supporter of those by whom the coalition had been defeated. It began when Burke and Fox, closely allied together, were attacking the influence of the Crown, and calling for peace with the American republic. It continued till Burke, alienated from Fox, and loaded with the favors of the Crown, died preaching a crusade against the French republic. We surely cannot attribute to the events of 1784 an enmity which began in 1781, and which retained undiminished force long after persons far more deeply implicated than Hastings in the events of 1784 had been cordially forgiven. And why should we look for any other explanation of Burke's conduct than that which we find on the surface? The plain truth is that Hastings had committed some great crimes, and that the thought of those crimes made the blood of Burke boil in his veins. For Burke was a man in whom compassion for suffering, and hatred of injustice and tyranny, were as strong as in Las Casas or Clarkson. And although in him, as in Las Casas and in Clarkson, these noble feelings were alloyed with the infirmity which belongs to human

nature, he is, like them, entitled to this great praise, that he devoted years of intense labor to the service of a people with whom he had neither blood nor language, neither religion nor manners, in common, and from whom no requital, no thanks, no applause, could be expected.

His knowledge of India was such as few, even of those Europeans who have passed many years in that country, have attained, and such as certainly was never attained by any public man who had not quitted Europe. He had studied the history, the laws, and the usages of the East with an industry such as is seldom found united to so much genius and so much sensibility. Others have perhaps been equally laborious, and have collected an equal mass of materials. But the manner in which Burke brought his higher powers of intellect to work on statements of facts and on tables of figures was peculiar to himself. In every part of those huge bales of Indian information which repelled almost all other readers, his mind, at once philosophical and poetical, found something to instruct or to delight. His reason analyzed and digested those vast and shapeless masses ; his imagination animated and colored them. Out of darkness and dulness and confusion he formed a multitude of ingenious theories and vivid pictures. He had, in the highest degree, that noble faculty whereby man is able to live in the past and in the future, in the distant and in the unreal. India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning sun ; the strange vegetation of the palm and the cocoa tree ; the rice-field ; the tank ; the huge trees, older than

the Mogul empire, under which the village crowds assemble ; the thatched roof of the peasant's hut ; the rich tracery of the mosque where the imaum prays with his face to Mecca ; the drums and banners and gaudy idols ; the devotee swinging in the air ; the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the river-side ; the black faces ; the long beards ; the yellow streaks of sect ; the turbans and the flowing robes ; the spears and the silver maces ; the elephants with their canopies of state ; the gorgeous palanquin of the prince and the close litter of the noble lady—all these things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed, as the objects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James's Street. All India was present to the eye of his mind—from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns to the wild moor where the gypsy camp was pitched ; from the bazaar, humming like a beehive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyenas. He had just as lively an idea of the insurrection of Benares as of Lord George Gordon's riots, and of the execution of Nuncomar as of the execution of Dr. Dodd. Oppression in Bengal was to him the same thing as oppression in the streets of London.

He saw that Hastings had been guilty of some most unjustifiable acts. All that followed was natural and necessary in a mind like Burke's. His imagination and his passions, once excited, hurried him beyond the bounds of justice and good sense. His reason, powerful as it was, became the slave of feelings which it should have controlled. His indignation, virtuous in

its origin, acquired too much of the character of personal aversion. He could see no mitigating circumstance, no redeeming merit. His temper, which, though generous and affectionate, had always been irritable, had now been made almost savage by bodily infirmities and mental vexations. Conscious of great powers and great virtues, he found himself, in age and poverty, a mark for the hatred of a perfidious court and a deluded people. In Parliament his eloquence was out of date. A young generation, which knew him not, had filled the House. Whenever he rose to speak, his voice was drowned by the unseemly interruption of lads who were in their cradles when his orations on the Stamp Act called forth the applause of the great Earl of Chatham. These things had produced on his proud and sensitive spirit an effect at which we cannot wonder. He could no longer discuss any question with calmness, or make allowance for honest differences of opinion. Those who think that he was more violent and acrimonious in debates about India than on other occasions are ill informed respecting the last years of his life. In the discussions on the Commercial Treaty with the Court of Versailles, on the Regency, on the French Revolution, he showed even more virulence than in conducting the impeachment. Indeed, it may be remarked that the very persons who called him a mischievous maniac for condemning in burning words the Rohilla war and the spoliation of the Begums exalted him into a prophet as soon as he began to declaim, with greater vehemence, and not with greater reason, against the taking of the Bastile and the insults offered to Marie Antoinette. To us he appears to have been neither a maniac in the former

case nor a prophet in the latter, but in both cases a great and good man, led into extravagance by a sensibility which domineered over all his faculties.

It may be doubted whether the personal antipathy of Francis or the nobler indignation of Burke would have led their party to adopt extreme measures against Hastings if his own conduct had been judicious. He should have felt that, great as his public services had been, he was not faultless, and should have been content to make his escape without aspiring to the honors of a triumph. He and his agent took a different view. They were impatient for the rewards which, as they conceived, were deferred only till Burke's attack should be over. They accordingly resolved to force on a decisive action with an enemy for whom, if they had been wise they would have made a bridge of gold. On the first day of the session of 1786 Major Scott reminded Burke of the notice given in the preceding year, and asked whether it was seriously intended to bring any charge against the late Governor-general. This challenge left no course open to the Opposition except to come forward as accusers or to acknowledge themselves calumniators. The administration of Hastings had not been so blameless, nor was the great party of Fox and North so feeble, that it could be prudent to venture on so bold a defiance. The leaders of the Opposition instantly returned the only answer which they could with honor return, and the whole party was irrevocably pledged to a prosecution.

Burke began his operations by applying for papers. Some of the documents for which he asked were refused by the ministers, who, in the debate, held language such as strongly confirmed the prevailing opinion that

they intended to support Hastings. In April the charges were laid on the table. They had been drawn by Burke with great ability, though in a form too much resembling that of a pamphlet. Hastings was furnished with a copy of the accusation ; and it was intimated to him that he might, if he thought fit, be heard in his own defence at the bar of the Commons.

Here again Hastings was pursued by the same fatality which had attended him ever since the day when he set foot on English ground. It seemed to be decreed that this man, so politic and so successful in the East, should commit nothing but blunders in Europe. Any judicious adviser would have told him that the best thing which he could do would be to make an eloquent, forcible, and affecting oration at the bar of the House ; but that if he could not trust himself to speak, and found it necessary to read, he ought to be as concise as possible. Audiences accustomed to extemporaneous debating of the highest excellence are always impatient of long written compositions. Hastings, however, sat down as he would have done at the Government-house in Bengal and prepared a paper of immense length. That paper, if recorded on the consultations of an Indian administration, would have been justly praised as a very able minute. But it was now out of place. It fell flat, as the best written defence must have fallen flat, on an assembly accustomed to the animated and strenuous conflicts of Pitt and Fox. The members, as soon as their curiosity about the face and demeanor of so eminent a stranger was satisfied, walked away to dinner, and left Hastings to tell his story till midnight to the clerks and the sergeant-at-arms.

All preliminary steps having been duly taken, Burke, in the beginning of June, brought forward the charge relating to the Rohilla war. He acted discreetly in placing this accusation in the van ; for Dundas had formerly moved, and the House had adopted, a resolution condemning in the most severe terms the policy followed by Hastings with regard to Rohilcund. Dundas had little, or rather nothing, to say in defence of his own consistency; but he put a bold face on the matter and opposed the motion. Among other things, he declared that, though he still thought the Rohilla war unjustifiable, he considered the services which Hastings had subsequently rendered to the State as sufficient to atone even for so great an offence. Pitt did not speak, but voted with Dundas, and Hastings was absolved by a hundred and nineteen votes against sixty-seven.

Hastings was now confident of victory. It seemed, indeed, that he had reason to be so. The Rohilla war was, of all his measures, that which his accusers might with greatest advantage assail. It had been condemned by the House of Commons. It had been condemned by Mr. Dundas, who had since become the chief minister of the Crown for Indian affairs. Yet Burke, having chosen this strong ground, had been completely defeated on it. That, having failed here, he should succeed on any point was generally thought impossible. It was rumored at the clubs and coffee-houses that one, or perhaps two, more charges would be brought forward ; that if, on those charges, the sense of the House of Commons should be against impeachment, the Opposition would let the matter drop ; that Hastings would be immediately raised to the peerage,

decorated with the Star of the Bath, sworn of the Privy Council, and invited to lend the assistance of his talents and experience to the India Board. Lord Thurlow, indeed, some months before, had spoken with contempt of the scruples which prevented Pitt from calling Hastings to the House of Lords ; and had even said that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was afraid of the Commons, there was nothing to prevent the Keeper of the Great Seal from taking the royal pleasure about a patent of peerage. The very title was chosen. Hastings was to be Lord Daylesford. For through all changes of scene and changes of fortune remained unchanged his attachment to the spot which had witnessed the greatness and the fall of his family, and which had borne so great a part in the first dreams of his young ambition.

But in a very few days these fair prospects were overcast. On the thirteenth of June Mr. Fox brought forward, with great ability and eloquence, the charge respecting the treatment of Cheyte Sing. Francis followed on the same side. The friends of Hastings were in high spirits when Pitt rose. With his usual abundance and felicity of language, the Minister gave his opinion on the case. He maintained that the Governor-general was justified in calling on the Rajah of Benares for pecuniary assistance, and in imposing a fine when that assistance was contumaciously withheld. He also thought that the conduct of the Governor-general during the insurrection had been distinguished by ability and presence of mind. He censured, with great bitterness, the conduct of Francis, both in India and in Parliament, as most dishonest and malignant. The necessary inference from Pitt's arguments seemed

to be that Hastings ought to be honorably acquitted, and both the friends and the opponents of the Minister expected from him a declaration to that effect. To the astonishment of all parties, he concluded by saying that though he thought it right in Hastings to fine Cheyte Sing for contumacy, yet the amount of the fine was too great for the occasion. On this ground, and on this ground alone, did Mr. Pitt, applauding every other part of the conduct of Mr. Hastings with regard to Benares, declare that he should vote in favor of Mr. Fox's motion.

The House was thunderstruck ; and it might well be so. For the wrong done to Cheyte Sing, even had it been as flagitious as Fox and Francis contended, was a trifle when compared with the horrors which had been inflicted on Rohilcund. But if Mr. Pitt's view of the case of Cheyte Sing were correct, there was no ground for an impeachment, or even for a vote of censure. If the offence of Hastings was really no more than this, that, having a right to impose a mulct, the amount of which mulct was not defined, but was left to be settled by his discretion, he had, not for his own advantage, but for that of the State, demanded too much, was this an offence which required a criminal proceeding of the highest solemnity, a criminal proceeding to which during sixty years no public functionary had been subjected ? We can see, we think, in what way a man of sense and integrity might have been induced to take any course respecting Hastings except the course which Mr. Pitt took. Such a man might have thought a great example necessary for the preventing of injustice and for the vindicating of the national honor, and might, on that ground, have voted for impeachment both on the Rohilla charge and on

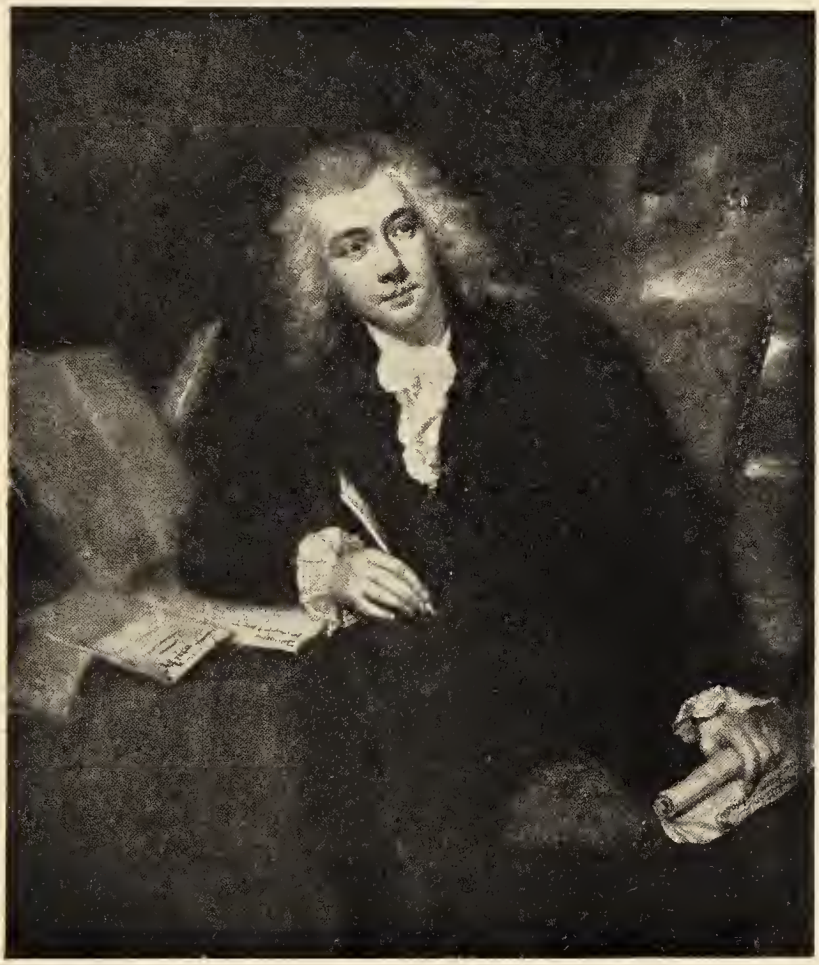
the Benares charge. Such a man might have thought that the offences of Hastings had been atoned for by great services, and might, on that ground, have voted against the impeachment on both charges. With great diffidence, we give it as our opinion that the most correct course would, on the whole, have been to impeach on the Rohilla charge and to acquit on the Benares charge. Had the Benares charge appeared to us in the same light in which it appeared to Mr. Pitt, we should, without hesitation, have voted for acquittal on that charge. The one course which it is inconceivable that any man of a tenth part of Mr. Pitt's abilities can have honestly taken was the course which he took. He acquitted Hastings on the Rohilla charge. He softened down the Benares charge till it became no charge at all, and then he pronounced that it contained matter for impeachment.

Nor must it be forgotten that the principal reason assigned by the ministry for not impeaching Hastings on account of the Rohilla war was this, that the delinquencies of the early part of his administration had been atoned for by the excellence of the later part. Was it not most extraordinary that men who had held this language could afterwards vote that the later part of his administration furnished matter for no less than twenty articles of impeachment? They first represented the conduct of Hastings in 1780 and 1781 as so highly meritorious that, like works of supererogation in the Catholic theology, it ought to be efficacious for the cancelling of former offences; and they then prosecuted him for his conduct in 1780 and 1781.

The general astonishment was the greater because, only twenty-four hours before, the members on whom

the Minister could depend had received the usual notes from the Treasury begging them to be in their places and to vote against Mr. Fox's motion. It was asserted by Mr. Hastings that, early on the morning of the very day on which the debate took place, Dundas called on Pitt, woke him, and was closeted with him many hours. The result of this conference was a determination to give up the late Governor-general to the vengeance of the Opposition. It was impossible even for the most powerful minister to carry all his followers with him in so strange a course. Several persons high in office, the Attorney-general, Mr. Grenville, and Lord Mulgrave divided against Mr. Pitt. But the devoted adherents who stood by the head of the government without asking questions were sufficiently numerous to turn the scale. A hundred and nineteen members voted for Mr. Fox's motion, seventy-nine against it. Dundas silently followed Pitt.

That good and great man, the late William Wilberforce, often related the events of this remarkable night. He described the amazement of the House and the bitter reflections which were muttered against the Prime-minister by some of the habitual supporters of government. Pitt himself appeared to feel that his conduct required some explanation. He left the Treasury bench, sat for some time next to Mr. Wilberforce, and very earnestly declared that he had found it impossible, as a man of conscience, to stand any longer by Hastings. The business, he said, was too bad. Mr. Wilberforce, we are bound to add, fully believed that his friend was sincere, and that the suspicions to which this mysterious affair gave rise were altogether unfounded.



Those suspicions, indeed, were such as it is painful to mention. The friends of Hastings, most of them, it is to be observed, generally supported the administration, affirmed that the motive of Pitt and Dundas was jealousy. Hastings was personally a favorite with the King. He was the idol of the East India Company and of its servants. If he were absolved by the Commons, seated among the Lords, admitted to the Board of Control, closely allied with the strong-minded and imperious Thurlow, was it not almost certain that he would soon draw to himself the entire management of Eastern affairs? Was it not possible that he might become a formidable rival in the Cabinet? It had probably got abroad that very singular communications had taken place between Thurlow and Major Scott; and that if the First Lord of the Treasury was afraid to recommend Hastings for a peerage, the Chancellor was ready to take the responsibility of that step on himself. Of all ministers, Pitt was the least likely to submit with patience to such an encroachment on his functions. If the Commons impeached Hastings, all danger was at an end. The proceeding, however it might terminate, would probably last some years. In the meantime the accused person would be excluded from honors and public employments, and could scarcely venture even to pay his duty at court. Such were the motives attributed by a great part of the public to the young minister, whose ruling passion was generally believed to be avarice of power.

The prorogation soon interrupted the discussions respecting Hastings. In the following year those discussions were resumed. The charge touching the spoliation of the Begums was brought forward by

Sheridan in a speech which was so imperfectly reported that it may be said to be wholly lost, but which was, without doubt, the most elaborately brilliant of all the productions of his ingenious mind. The impression which it produced was such as has never been equalled. He sat down, not merely amidst cheering, but amidst the loud clapping of hands, in which the Lords below the bar and the strangers in the gallery joined. The excitement of the House was such that no other speaker could obtain a hearing, and the debate was adjourned. The ferment spread fast through the town. Within four-and-twenty hours Sheridan was offered a thousand pounds for the copyright of the speech, if he would himself correct it for the press. The impression made by this remarkable display of eloquence on severe and experienced critics, whose discernment may be supposed to have been quickened by emulation, was deep and permanent. Mr. Windham, twenty years later, said that the speech deserved all its fame, and was, in spite of some faults of taste, such as were seldom wanting either in the literary or in the parliamentary performances of Sheridan, the finest that had been delivered within the memory of man. Mr. Fox, about the same time, being asked by the late Lord Holland what was the best speech ever made in the House of Commons, assigned the first place, without hesitation, to the great oration of Sheridan on the Oude charge.

When the debate was resumed, the tide ran so strongly against the accused that his friends were coughed and scraped down. Pitt declared himself for Sheridan's motion ; and the question was carried by a hundred and seventy-five votes against sixty-eight.

The Opposition, flushed with victory and strongly

supported by the public sympathy, proceeded to bring forward a succession of charges relating chiefly to pecuniary transactions. The friends of Hastings were discouraged, and, having now no hope of being able to avert an impeachment, were not very strenuous in their exertions. At length the House, having agreed to twenty articles of charge, directed Burke to go before the Lords, and to impeach the late Governor-general of high crimes and misdemeanors. Hastings was at the same time arrested by the sergeant-at-arms and carried to the bar of the Peers.

The session was now within ten days of its close. It was, therefore, impossible that any progress could be made in the trial till the next year. Hastings was admitted to bail; and further proceedings were postponed till the Houses should reassemble.

When Parliament met in the following winter, the Commons proceeded to elect a committee for managing the impeachment. Burke stood at the head; and with him were associated most of the leading members of the Opposition. But when the name of Francis was read, a fierce contention arose. It was said that Francis and Hastings were notoriously on bad terms; that they had been at feud during many years; that on occasion their mutual aversion had impelled them to seek each other's lives; and that it would be improper and indelicate to select a private enemy to be a public accuser. It was urged on the other side with great force, particularly by Mr. Windham, that impartiality, though the first duty of a judge, had never been reckoned among the qualities of an advocate; that in the ordinary administration of criminal justice among the English, the aggrieved party, the very last person who

ought to be admitted into the jury-box, is the prosecutor ; that what was wanted in a manager was, not that he should be free from bias, but that he should be able, well-informed, energetic, and active. The ability and information of Francis were admitted ; and the very animosity with which he was reproached, whether a virtue or a vice, was at least a pledge for his energy and activity. It seems difficult to refute these arguments. But the inveterate hatred borne by Francis to Hastings had excited general disgust. The House decided that Francis should not be a manager. Pitt voted with the majority, Dundas with the minority.

In the meantime, the preparations for the trial had proceeded rapidly; and on the thirteenth of February, 1788, the sittings of the court commenced. There have been spectacles more dazzling to the eye, more gorgeous with jewelry and cloth of gold, more attractive to grown-up children, than that which was then exhibited at Westminster ; but, perhaps, there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated, a reflecting, an imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interest which belong to the near and to the distant, to the present and to the past, were collected on one spot and in one hour. All the talents and all the accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilization were now displayed with every advantage that could be derived both from co-operation and from contrast. Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backwards, through many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid, or far away over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky nations living under strange stars, worshipping strange gods, and writing strange charac-

ters from right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit, according to forms handed down from the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the lord of the holy city of Benares and over the ladies of the princely house of Oude.

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers. The streets were kept clear by cavalry. The peers, robed in gold and ermine, were marshalled by the heralds under Garter King-at-arms. The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords—three fourths of the Upper House as the Upper House then was—walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal. The junior baron present led the way—George Eliott, Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defence of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain. The long procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of the Realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the King. Last of all came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The gray old walls

were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the Queen the fair-haired young daughters of the House of Brunswick. There the ambassadors of great kings and commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen, side by side, the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labors in that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition—a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid. There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There, too, was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race, the St. Cecilia whose delicate features, lighted up by love

and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticised, and exchanged repartees under the rich peacock-hangings of Mrs. Montagu. And there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury shone round Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

The sergeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar, and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect; a high and intellectual forehead; a brow pensive, but not gloomy; a mouth of inflexible decision; a face pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council-chamber at Calcutta, *Mens æqua in arduis:* such was the aspect with which the great proconsul presented himself to his judges.

His counsel accompanied him, men all of whom were afterwards raised by their talents and learning to the highest posts in their profession—the bold and strong-minded Law, afterwards Chief-justice of the King's Bench; the more humane and eloquent Dallas, afterwards Chief-justice of the Common Pleas; and Plomer,

who, near twenty years later, successfully conducted in the same high court the defence of Lord Melville, and subsequently became Vice-Chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

But neither the culprit nor his advocates attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red drapery, a space had been fitted up with green benches and tables for the Commons. The managers, with Burke at their head, appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox, generally so regardless of his appearance, had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a bag and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment ; and his commanding, copious, and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor ; and his friends were left without the help of his excellent sense, his tact, and his urbanity. But, in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides. There was Burke, ignorant, indeed, or negligent, of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers, but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator, ancient or modern. There, with eyes reverentially fixed on Burke, appeared the finest gentleman of the age, his form developed by every manly exercise, his face

beaming with intelligence and spirit, the ingenious, the chivalrous, the high-souled Windham. Nor, though surrounded by such men, did the youngest manager pass unnoticed. At an age when most of those who distinguish themselves in life are still contending for prizes and fellowships at college, he had won for himself a conspicuous place in Parliament. No advantage of fortune or connection was wanting that could set off to the height his splendid talents and his unblemished honor. At twenty-three he had been thought worthy to be ranked with the veteran statesmen who appeared as the delegates of the British Commons at the bar of the British nobility. All who stood at that bar, save him alone, are gone—culprit, advocates, accusers. To the generation which is now in the vigor of life, he is the sole representative of a great age which has passed away. But those who, within the last ten years, have listened with delight, till the morning sun shone on the tapestries of the House of Lords, to the lofty and animated eloquence of Charles Earl Grey, are able to form some estimate of the powers of a race of men among whom he was not the foremost.

The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The ceremony occupied two whole days, and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the clerk of the court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges. With an exuberance of thought and a splendor of diction which more than satisfied the highly raised expectation

of the audience, he described the character and institutions of the natives of India, recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated, and set forth the constitution of the Company and of the English presidencies. Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society as vivid as that which existed in his own mind, he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law. The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stern and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out ; smelling-bottles were handed round ; hysterical sobs and screams were heard ; and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the orator concluded. Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, " Therefore," said he, " hath it with all confidence been ordered by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors. I impeach him in the name of the Commons' House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honor he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden underfoot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name

of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all."

When the deep murmur of various emotions had subsided, Mr. Fox rose to address the Lords respecting the course of proceeding to be followed. The wish of the accusers was that the court would bring to a close the investigation of the first charge before the second was opened. The wish of Hastings and of his counsel was that the managers should open all the charges, and produce all the evidence for the prosecution, before the defence began. The Lords retired to their own house to consider the question. The Chancellor took the side of Hastings. Lord Loughborough, who was now in opposition, supported the demand of the managers. The division showed which way the inclination of the tribunal leaned. A majority of near three to one decided in favor of the course for which Hastings contended.

When the court sat again, Mr. Fox, assisted by Mr. Grey, opened the charge respecting Cheyte Sing, and several days were spent in reading papers and hearing witnesses. The next article was that relating to the Princesses of Oude. The conduct of this part of the case was intrusted to Sheridan. The curiosity of the public to hear him was unbounded. His sparkling and highly finished declamation lasted two days; but the Hall was crowded to suffocation during the whole time. It was said that fifty guineas had been paid for a single ticket. Sheridan, when he concluded, contrived, with a knowledge of stage-effect which his father might have envied, to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration.

June was now far advanced. The session could not last much longer ; and the progress which had been made in the impeachment was not very satisfactory. There were twenty charges. On two only of these had even the case for the prosecution been heard ; and it was now a year since Hastings had been admitted to bail.

The interest taken by the public in the trial was great when the court began to sit, and rose to the height when Sheridan spoke on the charge relating to the Begums. From that time the excitement went down fast. The spectacle had lost the attraction of novelty. The great displays of rhetoric were over. What was behind was not of a nature to entice men of letters from their books in the morning, or to tempt ladies who had left the masquerade at two to be out of bed before eight. There remained examinations and cross-examinations. There remained statements of accounts. There remained the reading of papers filled with words unintelligible to English ears, with lacs and crores, zemindars and aumils, sunnuds and perwannahs, jaghires and nuzzurs. There remained bickerings, not always carried on with the best taste or with the best temper, between the managers of the impeachment and the council for the defence, particularly between Mr. Burke and Mr. Law. There remained the endless marches and countermarches of the Peers between their House and the Hall ; for as often as a point of law was to be discussed, their lordships retired to discuss it apart ; and the consequence was, as a peer wittily said, that the Judges walked and the trial stood still.

It is to be added that in the spring of 1788, when the trial commenced, no important question, either of

domestic or foreign policy, occupied the public mind. The proceeding in Westminster Hall, therefore, naturally attracted most of the attention of Parliament and of the public. It was the one great event of that season. But in the following year the King's illness, the debates on the Regency, the expectation of a change of ministry, completely diverted public attention from Indian affairs ; and within a fortnight after George the Third had returned thanks in St. Paul's for his recovery, the States-General of France met at Versailles. In the midst of the agitation produced by these events, the impeachment was for a time almost forgotten.

The trial in the Hall went on languidly. In the session of 1788, when the proceedings had the interest of novelty, and when the Peers had little other business before them, only thirty-five days were given to the impeachment. In 1789 the Regency Bill occupied the Upper House till the session was far advanced. When the King recovered the circuits were beginning. The judges left town ; the Lords waited for the return of the oracles of jurisprudence ; and the consequence was that during the whole year only seventeen days were given to the case of Hastings. It was clear that the matter would be protracted to a length unprecedented in the annals of criminal law.

In truth, it is impossible to deny that impeachment, though it is a fine ceremony, and though it may have been useful in the seventeenth century, is not a proceeding from which much good can now be expected. Whatever confidence may be placed in the decision of the Peers on an appeal arising out of ordinary litigation, it is certain that no man has the least confidence in their impartiality when a great public functionary,

charged with a great state crime, is brought to their bar. They are all politicians. There is hardly one among them whose vote on an impeachment may not be confidently predicted before a witness has been examined ; and even if it were possible to rely on their justice, they would still be quite unfit to try such a cause as that of Hastings. They sit only during half the year. They have to transact much legislative and much judicial business. The law-lords, whose advice is required to guide the unlearned majority, are employed daily in administering justice elsewhere. It is impossible, therefore, that during a busy session the Upper House should give more than a few days to an impeachment. To expect that their lordships would give up partridge-shooting in order to bring the greatest delinquent to speedy justice, or to relieve accused innocence by speedy acquittal, would be unreasonable indeed. A well-constituted tribunal, sitting regularly six days in the week, and nine hours in the day, would have brought the trial of Hastings to a close in less than three months. The Lords had not finished their work in seven years.

The result ceased to be a matter of doubt from the time when the Lords resolved that they would be guided by the rules of evidence which are received by the inferior courts of the realm. Those rules, it is well known, exclude much information which would be quite sufficient to determine the conduct of any reasonable man in the most important transactions of private life. These rules, at every assize, save scores of culprits whom judges, jury, and spectators firmly believe to be guilty. But when those rules were rigidly applied to offences committed many years before, at the

distance of many thousands of miles, conviction was, of course, out of the question. We do not blame the accused and his counsel for availing themselves of every legal advantage in order to obtain an acquittal. But it is clear that an acquittal so obtained cannot be pleaded in bar of the judgment of history.

Several attempts were made by the friends of Hastings to put a stop to the trial. In 1789 they proposed a vote of censure upon Burke for some violent language which he had used respecting the death of Nuncomar and the connection between Hastings and Impey. Burke was then unpopular in the last degree both with the House and with the country. The asperity and indecency of some expressions which he had used during the debates on the Regency had annoyed even his warmest friends. The vote of censure was carried; and those who had moved it hoped that the managers would resign in disgust. Burke was deeply hurt. But his zeal for what he considered as the cause of justice and mercy triumphed over his personal feelings. He received the censure of the House with dignity and meekness, and declared that no personal mortification or humiliation should induce him to flinch from the sacred duty which he had undertaken.

In the following year the Parliament was dissolved, and the friends of Hastings entertained a hope that the new House of Commons might not be disposed to go on with the impeachment. They began by maintaining that the whole proceeding was terminated by the dissolution. Defeated on this point, they made a direct motion that the impeachment should be dropped; but they were defeated by the combined forces of the government and the Opposition. It was, however, resolved

that, for the sake of expedition, many of the articles should be withdrawn. In truth, had not some such measure been adopted, the trial would have lasted till the defendant was in his grave.

At length, in the spring of 1795, the decision was pronounced, near eight years after Hastings had been brought by the sergeant-at-arms of the Commons to the bar of the Lords. On the last day of this great procedure the public curiosity, long suspended, seemed to be revived. Anxiety about the judgment there could be none ; for it had been fully ascertained that there was a great majority for the defendant. Nevertheless, many wished to see the pageant, and the Hall was as much crowded as on the first day. But those who, having been present on the first day, now bore a part in the proceedings of the last, were few ; and most of those few were altered men.

As Hastings himself said, the arraignment had taken place before one generation, and the judgment was pronounced by another. The spectator could not look at the woolsack, or at the red benches of the Peers, or at the green benches of the Commons, without seeing something that reminded him of the instability of all human things—of the instability of power and fame and life, of the more lamentable instability of friendship. The great seal was borne before Lord Loughborough who, when the trial commenced, was a fierce opponent of Mr. Pitt's government, and who was now a member of that government ; while Thurlow, who presided in the court when it first sat, estranged from all his old allies, sat scowling among the junior barons. Of about a hundred and sixty nobles who walked in the procession on the first day, sixty had been laid in

their family vaults. Still more affecting must have been the sight of the managers' box. What had become of that fair fellowship, so closely bound together by public and private ties, so resplendent with every talent and accomplishment? It had been scattered by calamities more bitter than the bitterness of death. The great chiefs were still living, and still in the full vigor of their genius. But their friendship was at an end. It had been violently and publicly dissolved, with tears and stormy reproaches. If those men, once so dear to each other, were now compelled to meet for the purpose of managing the impeachment, they met as strangers whom public business had brought together, and behaved to each other with cold and distant civility. Burke had in his vortex whirled away Windham. Fox had been followed by Sheridan and Grey.

Only twenty-nine peers voted. Of these only six found Hastings guilty on the charges relating to Cheyte Sing and to the Begums. On other charges, the majority in his favor was still greater. On some, he was unanimously absolved. He was then called to the bar, was informed from the woolsack that the Lords had acquitted him, and was solemnly discharged. He bowed respectfully and retired.

We have said that the decision had been fully expected. It was also generally approved. At the commencement of the trial there had been a strong and indeed unreasonable feeling against Hastings. At the close of the trial there was a feeling equally strong and equally unreasonable in his favor. One cause of the change was, no doubt, what is commonly called the fickleness of the multitude, but what seems to us to be

merely the general law of human nature. Both in individuals and in masses violent excitement is always followed by remission, and often by reaction. We are all inclined to depreciate whatever we have overpraised, and, on the other hand, to show undue indulgence where we have shown undue rigor. It was thus in the case of Hastings. The length of his trial, moreover, made him an object of compassion. It was thought, and not without reason, that, even if he was guilty, he was still an ill-used man, and that an impeachment of eight years was more than a sufficient punishment. It was also felt that, though in the ordinary course of criminal law a defendant is not allowed to set off his good actions against his crimes, a great political cause should be tried on different principles, and that a man who had governed an empire during thirteen years might have done some very reprehensible things, and yet might be, on the whole, deserving of rewards and honors rather than of fine and imprisonment. The press, an instrument neglected by the prosecutors, was used by Hastings and his friends with great effect. Every ship, too, that arrived from Madras or Bengal, brought a cuddyful of his admirers. Every gentleman from India spoke of the late Governor-general as having deserved better, and having been treated worse, than any man living. The effect of this testimony, unanimously given by all persons who knew the East, was naturally very great. Retired members of the Indian services, civil and military, were settled in all corners of the kingdom. Each of them was, of course, in his own little circle, regarded as an oracle on an Indian question ; and they were, with scarcely one exception, the zealous advocates of Hastings. It is to be

added that the numerous addresses to the late Governor-general which his friends in Bengal obtained from the natives and transmitted to England, made a considerable impression. To these addresses we attach little or no importance. That Hastings was beloved by the people whom he governed is true ; but the eulogies of pundits, zemindars, Mahometan doctors, do not prove it to be true. For an English collector or judge would have found it easy to induce any native who could write to sign a panegyric on the most odious ruler that ever was in India. It was said that at Benares, the very place at which the acts set forth in the first article of impeachment had been committed, the natives had erected a temple to Hastings ; and this story excited a strong sensation in England. Burke's observations on the apotheosis were admirable. He saw no reason for astonishment, he said, in the incident which had been represented as so striking. He knew something of the mythology of the Brahmins. He knew that as they worshipped some gods from love, so they worshipped others from fear. He knew that they erected shrines, not only to the benignant deities of light and plenty, but also to the fiends who preside over small-pox and murder. Nor did he at all dispute the claim of Mr. Hastings to be admitted into such a Pantheon. This reply has always struck us as one of the finest that ever were made in Parliament. It is a grave and forcible argument, decorated by the most brilliant wit and fancy.

Hastings was, however, safe. But in everything except character he would have been far better off if, when first impeached, he had at once pleaded guilty and paid a fine of fifty thousand pounds. He was a ruined man. The legal expenses of his defence had

been enormous. The expenses which did not appear in his attorney's bill were perhaps larger still. Great sums had been paid to Major Scott. Great sums had been laid out in bribing newspapers, rewarding pamphleteers, and circulating tracts. Burke, so early as 1790, declared in the House of Commons that twenty thousand pounds had been employed in corrupting the press. It is certain that no controversial weapon, from the gravest reasoning to the coarsest ribaldry, was left unemployed. Logan defended the accused Governor with great ability in prose. For the lovers of verse, the speeches of the managers were burlesqued in Simpkin's letters. It is, we are afraid, indisputable that Hastings stooped so low as to court the aid of that malignant and filthy baboon John Williams, who called himself Anthony Pasquin. It was necessary to subsidize such allies largely. The private hoards of Mrs. Hastings had disappeared. It is said that the banker to whom they had been intrusted had failed. Still, if Hastings had practised strict economy, he would, after all his losses, have had a moderate competence ; but in the management of his private affairs he was imprudent. The dearest wish of his heart had always been to regain Daylesford. At length, in the very year in which his trial commenced, the wish was accomplished ; and the domain, alienated more than seventy years before, returned to the descendant of its old lords. But the manor-house was a ruin ; and the grounds round it had, during many years, been utterly neglected. Hastings proceeded to build, to plant, to form a sheet of water, to excavate a grotto ; and, before he was dismissed from the bar of the House of Lords, he expended more than forty thousand pounds in adorning his seat.

The general feeling both of the Directors and of the proprietors of the East India Company was that he had great claims on them, that his services to them had been eminent, and that his misfortunes had been the effect of his zeal for their interest. His friends in Leadenhall Street proposed to reimburse him for the costs of his trial, and to settle on him an annuity of five thousand pounds a year. But the consent of the Board of Control was necessary; and at the head of the Board of Control was Mr. Dundas, who had himself been a party to the impeachment, who had, on that account, been reviled with great bitterness by the adherents of Hastings, and who, therefore, was not in a very complying mood. He refused to consent to what the Directors suggested. The Directors remonstrated. A long controversy followed. Hastings, in the meantime, was reduced to such distress that he could hardly pay his weekly bills. At length a compromise was made. An annuity for life of four thousand pounds was settled on Hastings ; and in order to enable him to meet pressing demands, he was to receive ten years' annuity in advance. The Company was also permitted to lend him fifty thousand pounds, to be repaid by instalments without interest. This relief, though given in the most absurd manner, was sufficient to enable the retired Governor to live in comfort, and even in luxury, if he had been a skilful manager. But he was careless and profuse, and was more than once under the necessity of applying to the Company for assistance, which was liberally given.

He had security and affluence, but not the power and dignity which, when he landed from India, he had reason to expect. He had then looked forward to a coronet,

a red ribbon, a seat at the Council-board, an office at Whitehall. He was then only fifty-two, and might hope for many years of bodily and mental vigor. The case was widely different when he left the bar of the Lords. He was now too old a man to turn his mind to a new class of studies and duties. He had no chance of receiving any mark of royal favor while Mr. Pitt remained in power ; and when Mr. Pitt retired, Hastings was approaching his seventieth year.

Once, and only once, after his acquittal, he interfered in politics ; and that interference was not much to his honor. In 1804, he exerted himself strenuously to prevent Mr. Addington, against whom Fox and Pitt had combined, from resigning the Treasury. It is difficult to believe that a man so able and energetic as Hastings can have thought that, when Bonaparte was at Boulogne with a great army, the defence of our island could safely be intrusted to a ministry which did not contain a single person whom flattery could describe as a great statesman. It is also certain that, on the important question which had raised Mr. Addington to power, and on which he differed from both Fox and Pitt, Hastings, as might have been expected, agreed with Fox and Pitt, and was decidedly opposed to Addington. Religious intolerance has never been the vice of the Indian service, and certainly was not the vice of Hastings. But Mr. Addington had treated him with marked favor. Fox had been a principal manager of the impeachment. To Pitt it was owing that there had been an impeachment ; and Hastings, we fear, was on this occasion guided by personal considerations rather than by a regard to the public interest.

The last twenty-four years of his life were chiefly

passed at Daylesford. He amused himself with embellishing his grounds, riding fine Arab horses, fattening prize-cattle, and trying to rear Indian animals and vegetables in England. He sent for seeds of a very fine custard-apple, from the garden of what had once been his own villa, among the green hedgerows of Allipore. He tried also to naturalize in Worcestershire the delicious leechee, almost the only fruit of Bengal which deserves to be regretted even amidst the plenty of Covent Garden. The Mogul emperors, in the time of their greatness, had in vain attempted to introduce into Hindostan the goat of the table-land of Thibet, whose down supplies the looms of Cashmere with the materials of the finest shawls. Hastings tried, with no better fortune, to rear a breed at Daylesford ; nor does he seem to have succeeded better with the cattle of Bootan, whose tails are in high esteem as the best fans for brushing away the mosquitoes.

Literature divided his attention with his conservatories and his menagerie. He had always loved books, and they were now necessary to him. Though not a poet in any high sense of the word, he wrote neat and polished lines with great facility, and was fond of exercising this talent. Indeed, if we must speak out, he seems to have been more of a Trissotin than was to be expected from the powers of his mind and from the great part which he had played in life. We are assured in these Memoirs that the first thing which he did in the morning was to write a copy of verses. When the family and guests assembled, the poem made its appearance as regularly as the eggs and rolls ; and Mr. Gleig requires us to believe that, if from any accident Hastings came to the breakfast-table without one of his

charming performances in his hand, the omission was felt by all as a grievous disappointment. Tastes differ widely. For ourselves we must say that, however good the breakfasts at Daylesford may have been—and we are assured that the tea was of the most aromatic flavor, and that neither tongue nor venison-pasty was wanting —we should have thought the reckoning high if we had been forced to earn our repast by listening every day to a new madrigal or sonnet composed by our host. We are glad, however, that Mr. Gleig has preserved this little feature of character, though we think it by no means a beauty. It is good to be often reminded of the inconsistency of human nature, and to learn to look without wonder or disgust on the weaknesses which are found in the strongest minds. Dionysius in old times, Frederic in the last century, with capacity and vigor equal to the conduct of the greatest affairs, united all the little vanities and affectations of provincial blue-stockings. These great examples may console the admirers of Hastings for the affliction of seeing him reduced to the level of the Hayleys and Sewards.

When Hastings had passed many years in retirement, and had long outlived the common age of men, he again became for a short time an object of general attention. In 1813, the charter of the East India Company was renewed ; and much discussion about Indian affairs took place in Parliament. It was determined to examine witnesses at the bar of the Commons ; and Hastings was ordered to attend. He had appeared at that bar once before. It was when he read his answer to the charges which Burke had laid on the table. Since that time twenty-seven years had elapsed; public feeling had undergone a complete change ; the nation

had now forgotten his faults, and remembered only his services. The reappearance, too, of a man who had been among the most distinguished of a generation that had passed away, who now belonged to history, and who seemed to have risen from the dead, could not but produce a solemn and pathetic effect. The Commons received him with acclamations, ordered a chair to be set for him, and, when he retired, rose and uncovered. There were, indeed, a few who did not sympathize with the general feeling. One or two of the managers of the impeachment were present. They sat in the same seats which they had occupied when they had been thanked for the services which they had rendered in Westminster Hall; for, by the courtesy of the House, a member who has been thanked in his place is considered as having a right always to occupy that place. These gentlemen were not disposed to admit that they had employed several of the best years of their lives in persecuting an innocent man. They accordingly kept their seats, and pulled their hats over their brows ; but the exceptions only made the prevailing enthusiasm more remarkable. The Lords received the old man with similar tokens of respect. The University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws ; and in the Sheldonian Theatre the undergraduates welcomed him with tumultuous cheering.

These marks of public esteem were soon followed by marks of royal favor. Hastings was sworn of the Privy Council, and was admitted to a long private audience of the Prince Regent, who treated him very graciously. When the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia visited England, Hastings appeared in their train both at Oxford and in the Guildhall of

London, and, though surrounded by a crowd of princes and great warriors, was everywhere received with marks of respect and admiration. He was presented by the Prince Regent both to Alexander and to Frederic William ; and his Royal Highness went so far as to declare in public that honors far higher than a seat in the Privy Council were due, and would soon be paid to the man who had saved the British dominions in Asia. Hastings now confidently expected a peerage ; but, for some unexplained cause, he was again disappointed.

He lived about four years longer, in the enjoyment of good spirits, of faculties not impaired to any painful or degrading extent, and of health such as is rarely enjoyed by those who attain such an age. At length, on the twenty-second of August, 1818, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, he met death with the same tranquil and decorous fortitude which he had opposed to all the trials of his various and eventful life.

With all his faults—and they were neither few nor small—only one cemetery was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried, in the Great Abbey which has during many ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall, the dust of the illustrious accused should have mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be. Yet the place of interment was not ill chosen. Behind the chancel of the parish church at Daylesford, in earth which already held the bones of many chiefs of the House of Hastings, was laid the coffin of the greatest man who has ever borne that ancient and widely extended name. On that very spot

probably, fourscore years before, the little Warren, meanly clad and scantily fed, had played with the children of ploughmen. Even then his young mind had revolved plans which might be called romantic. Yet, however romantic, it is not likely that they had been so strange as the truth. Not only had the poor orphan retrieved the fallen fortunes of his line. Not only had he repurchased the old lands and rebuilt the old dwelling. He had preserved and extended an empire. He had founded a polity. He had administered government and war with more than the capacity of Richelieu. He had patronized learning with the judicious liberality of Cosmo. He had been attacked by the most formidable combination of enemies that ever sought the destruction of a single victim; and over that combination, after a struggle of ten years, he had triumphed. He had at length gone down to his grave in the fulness of age, in peace after so many troubles, in honor after so much obloquy.

Those who look on his character without favor or malevolence will pronounce that in the two great elements of all social virtue—in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others—he was deficient. His principles were somewhat lax. His heart was somewhat hard. But though we cannot with truth describe him either as a righteous or as a merciful ruler, we cannot regard without admiration the amplitude and fertility of his intellect; his rare talents for command, for administration, and for controversy; his dauntless courage; his honorable poverty; his fervent zeal for the interests of the State; his noble equanimity, tried by both extremes of fortunes, and never disturbed by either.

FREDERIC THE GREAT. (April, 1842.)

Frederic the Great and his Times. Edited, with an Introduction, by Thomas Campbell, Esq. 2 vols., 8vo. London: 1842.

THIS work, which has the high honor of being introduced to the world by the author of Lochiel and Hohenlinden, is not wholly unworthy of so distinguished a chaperon. It professes, indeed, to be no more than a compilation; but it is an exceedingly amusing compilation, and we shall be glad to have more of it. The narrative comes down at present only to the commencement of the Seven Years' War, and therefore does not comprise the most interesting portion of Frederic's reign.

It may not be unacceptable to our readers that we should take this opportunity of presenting them with a slight sketch of the life of the greatest king that has, in modern times, succeeded by right of birth to a throne. It may, we fear, be impossible to compress so long and eventful a story within the limits which we must prescribe to ourselves. Should we be compelled to break off, we may, perhaps, when the continuation of this work appears, return to the subject.

The Prussian monarchy, the youngest of the great European states, but in population and revenue the

fifth among them, and in art, science, and civilization entitled to the third, if not to the second, place, sprang from an humble origin. About the beginning of the fifteenth century, the marquisate of Brandenburg was bestowed by the Emperor Sigismund on the noble family of Hohenzollern. In the sixteenth century that family embraced the Lutheran doctrines. It obtained from the King of Poland, early in the seventeenth century, the investiture of the duchy of Prussia. Even after this accession of territory, the chiefs of the House of Hohenzollern hardly ranked with the electors of Saxony and Bavaria. The soil of Brandenburg was, for the most part, sterile. Even round Berlin, the capital of the province, and round Potsdam, the favorite residence of the margraves, the country was a desert. In some places, the deep sand could with difficulty be forced by assiduous tillage to yield thin crops of rye and oats. In other places, the ancient forests, from which the conquerors of the Roman empire had descended on the Danube, remained untouched by the hand of man. Where the soil was rich it was generally marshy, and its insalubrity repelled the cultivators whom its fertility attracted. Frederic William, called the Great Elector, was the prince to whose policy his successors have agreed to ascribe their greatness. He acquired by the Peace of Westphalia several valuable possessions, and among them the rich city and district of Magdeburg ; and he left to his son Frederic a principality as considerable as any which was not called a kingdom.

Frederic aspired to the style of royalty. Ostentatious and profuse, negligent of his true interests and of his high duties, insatiably eager for frivolous distinctions,

he added nothing to the real weight of the state which he governed : perhaps he transmitted his inheritance to his children impaired rather than augmented in value ; but he succeeded in gaining the great object of his life, the title of King. In the year 1701 he assumed this new dignity. He had on that occasion to undergo all the mortifications which fall to the lot of ambitious upstarts. Compared with the other crowned heads of Europe, he made a figure resembling that which a nabob or a commissary who had bought a title would make in the company of peers whose ancestors had been attainted for treason against the Plantagenets. The envy of the class which Frederic quitted, and the civil scorn of the class into which he intruded himself, were marked in very significant ways. The Elector of Saxony at first refused to acknowledge the new Majesty. Louis the Fourteenth looked down on his brother king with an air not unlike that with which the Count in Molière's play regards Monsieur Jourdain, just fresh from the mummery of being made a gentleman. Austria exacted large sacrifices in return for her recognition, and at last gave it ungraciously.

Frederic was succeeded by his son, Frederic William, a prince who must be allowed to have possessed some talents for administration, but whose character was disfigured by odious vices, and whose eccentricities were such as had never before been seen out of a madhouse. He was exact and diligent in the transacting of business ; and he was the first who formed the design of obtaining for Prussia a place among the European powers, altogether out of proportion to her extent and population, by means of a strong military organization. Strict economy enabled him to keep up a peace

establishment of sixty thousand troops. These troops were disciplined in such a manner that, placed beside them, the household regiments of Versailles and St. James's would have appeared an awkward-squad. The master of such a force could not but be regarded by all his neighbors as a formidable enemy and a valuable ally.

But the mind of Frederic William was so ill regulated that all his inclinations became passions, and all his passions partook of the character of moral and intellectual disease. His parsimony degenerated into sordid avarice. His taste for military pomp and order became a mania, like that of a Dutch burgomaster for tulips, or that of a member of the Roxburghe Club for Caxtons. While the envoys of the Court of Berlin were in a state of such squalid poverty as moved the laughter of foreign capitals, while the food placed before the princes and princesses of the blood royal of Prussia was too scanty to appease hunger, and so bad that even hunger loathed it, no price was thought too extravagant for tall recruits. The ambition of the King was to form a brigade of giants, and every country was ransacked by his agents for men above the ordinary stature. These researches were not confined to Europe. No head that towered above the crowd in the bazaars of Aleppo, of Cairo, or of Surat could escape the crimps of Frederic William. One Irishman more than seven feet high, who was picked up in London by the Prussian ambassador, received a bounty of near thirteen hundred pounds sterling, very much more than the ambassador's salary. This extravagance was the more absurd because a stout youth of five feet eight, who might have been procured for a few dollars,

would in all probability have been a much more valuable soldier. But to Frederic William this huge Irishman was what a brass Otho or a Vinegar Bible is to a collector of a different kind.

It is remarkable that though the main end of Frederic William's administration was to have a great military force, though his reign forms an important epoch in the history of military discipline, and though his dominant passion was the love of military display, he was yet one of the most pacific of princes. We are afraid that his aversion to war was not the effect of humanity, but was merely one of his thousand whims. His feeling about his troops seems to have resembled a miser's feeling about his money. He loved to collect them, to count them, to see them increase ; but he could not find it in his heart to break in upon the precious hoard. He looked forward to some future time when his Patagonian battalions were to drive hostile infantry before them like sheep; but this future time was always receding ; and it is probable that, if his life had been prolonged thirty years, his superb army would never have seen any harder service than a sham fight in the fields near Berlin. But the great military means which he had collected were destined to be employed by a spirit far more daring and inventive than his own.

Frederic, surnamed the Great, son of Frederic William, was born in January, 1712. It may safely be pronounced that he had received from nature a strong and sharp understanding, and a rare firmness of temper and intensity of will. As to the other parts of his character, it is difficult to say whether they are to be ascribed to nature or to the strange training which he underwent. The history of his boyhood is painfully inter-

esting. Oliver Twist in the parish workhouse, Smike at Dotheboys Hall, were petted children when compared with this wretched heir apparent of a crown. The nature of Frederick William was hard and bad, and the habit of exercising arbitrary power had made him frightfully savage. His rage constantly vented itself to right and left in curses and blows. When his Majesty took a walk, every human being fled before him, as if a tiger had broken loose from a menagerie. If he met a lady in the street, he gave her a kick, and told her to go home and mind her brats. If he saw a clergyman staring at the soldiers, he admonished the reverend gentleman to betake himself to study and prayer, and enforced this pious advice by a sound caning, administered on the spot. But it was in his own house that he was most unreasonable and ferocious. His palace was hell, and he the most execrable of fiends, a cross between Moloch and Puck. His son Frederic and his daughter Wilhelmina, afterwards Margravine of Baireuth, were in an especial manner objects of his aversion. His own mind was uncultivated. He despised literature. He hated infidels, papists, and metaphysicians, and did not very well understand in what they differed from each other. The business of life, according to him, was to drill and to be drilled. The recreations suited to a prince were to sit in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, to sip Swedish beer between the puffs of the pipe, to play backgammon for three halfpence a rubber, to kill wild hogs, and to shoot partridges by the thousand. The Prince Royal showed little inclination either for the serious employments or for the amusements of his father. He shirked the duties of the parade ; he detested the fume of tobacco ; he had

no taste either for backgammon or for field sports. He had an exquisite ear, and performed skilfully on the flute. His earliest instructors had been French refugees, and they had awakened in him a strong passion for French literature and French society. Frederic William regarded these tastes as effeminate and contemptible, and, by abuse and persecution, made them still stronger. Things became worse when the Prince Royal attained that time of life at which the great revolution in the human mind and body takes place. He was guilty of some youthful indiscretions, which no good and wise parent would regard with severity. At a later period he was accused, truly or falsely, of vices from which history averts her eyes, and which even Satire blushes to name—vices such that, to borrow the energetic language of Lord Keeper Coventry, "the depraved nature of man, which of itself carrieth man to all other sin, abhorreth them." But the offences of his youth were not characterized by any peculiar turpitude. They excited, however, transports of rage in the King, who hated all faults except those to which he was himself inclined, and who conceived that he made ample atonement to Heaven for his brutality by holding the softer passions in detestation. The Prince Royal, too, was not one of those who are content to take their religion on trust. He asked puzzling questions, and brought forward arguments which seemed to savor of something different from pure Lutheranism. The King suspected that his son was inclined to be a heretic of some sort or other, whether Calvinist or Atheist his Majesty did not very well know. The ordinary malignity of Frederic William was bad enough. He now thought malignity a part of his duty as a Christian

man, and all the conscience that he had stimulated his hatred. The flute was broken ; the French books were sent out of the palace ; the Prince was kicked and cudgelled, and pulled by the hair. At dinner the plates were hurled at his head. Sometimes he was restricted to bread and water ; sometimes he was forced to swallow food so nauseous that he could not keep it on his stomach. Once his father knocked him down, dragged him along the floor to a window, and was with difficulty prevented from strangling him with the cord of the curtain. The Queen, for the crime of not wishing to see her son murdered, was subjected to the grossest indignities. The Princess Wilhelmina, who took her brother's part, was treated almost as ill as Mrs. Brownrigg's apprentices. Driven to despair, the unhappy youth tried to run away. Then the fury of the old tyrant rose to madness. The Prince was an officer in the army; his flight was therefore desertion ; and in the moral code of Frederic William desertion was the highest of all crimes. " Desertion," says this royal theologian, in one of his half-crazy letters, " is from hell. It is a work of the children of the devil. No child of God could possibly be guilty of it." An accomplice of the Prince, in spite of the recommendation of a court-martial, was mercilessly put to death. It seemed probable that the Prince himself would suffer the same fate. It was with difficulty that the intercession of the States of Holland, of the kings of Sweden and Poland, and of the Emperor of Germany saved the House of Brandenburg from the stain of an unnatural murder. After months of cruel suspense, Frederic learned that his life would be spared. He remained, however, long a prisoner ; but he was not on that ac-

count to be pitied. He found in his jailers a tenderness which he had never found in his father. His table was not sumptuous, but he had wholesome food in sufficient quantity to appease hunger; he could read the Henriade without being kicked, and could play on his flute without having it broken over his head.

When his confinement terminated he was a man. He had nearly completed his twenty-first year, and could scarcely be kept much longer under the restraints which had made his boyhood miserable. Suffering had matured his understanding, while it had hardened his heart and soured his temper. He had learned self-command and dissimulation ; he affected to conform to some of his father's views, and submissively accepted a wife, who was a wife only in name, from his father's hand. He also served with credit, though without any opportunity of acquiring brilliant distinction, under the command of Prince Eugene, during a campaign marked by no extraordinary events. He was now permitted to keep a separate establishment, and was therefore able to indulge with caution his own tastes. Partly in order to conciliate the King, and partly, no doubt, from inclination, he gave up a portion of his time to military and political business, and thus gradually acquired such an aptitude for affairs as his most intimate associates were not aware that he possessed.

His favorite abode was at Rheinsberg, near the frontier which separates the Prussian dominions from the duchy of Mecklenburg. Rheinsberg is a fertile and smiling spot, in the midst of a sandy waste of the marquisate. The mansion, surrounded by woods of oak and beech, looks out upon a spacious lake. There Frederic amused himself by laying out gardens in regu-

lar alleys and intricate mazes, by building obelisks, temples, and conservatories, and by collecting rare fruits and flowers. His retirement was enlivened by a few companions, among whom he seems to have preferred those who, by birth and extraction, were French. With these inmates he dined and supped well, drank freely, and amused himself sometimes with concerts, and sometimes with holding chapters of a fraternity which he called the Order of Bayard ; but literature was his chief resource.

His education had been entirely French. The long ascendency which Louis the Fourteenth had enjoyed, and the eminent merit of the tragic and comic dramatists, of the satirists, and of the preachers who had flourished under that magnificent prince, had made the French language predominant in Europe. Even in countries which had a national literature, and which could boast of names greater than those of Racine, of Molière, and of Massillon—in the country of Dante, in the country of Cervantes, in the country of Shakspeare and Milton—the intellectual fashions of Paris had been to a great extent adopted. Germany had not yet produced a single masterpiece of poetry or eloquence. In Germany, therefore, the French taste reigned without rival and without limit. Every youth of rank was taught to speak and write French. That he should speak and write his own tongue with politeness, or even with accuracy and facility, was regarded as comparatively an unimportant object. Even Frederic William, with all his rugged Saxon prejudices, thought it necessary that his children should know French, and quite unnecessary that they should be well versed in German. The Latin was positively interdicted.

"My son," his Majesty wrote, "shall not learn Latin; and, more than that, I will not suffer anybody even to mention such a thing to me." One of the preceptors ventured to read the Golden Bull in the original with the Prince Royal. Frederic William entered the room, and broke out in his usual kingly style:

"Rascal, what are you at there?"

"Please your Majesty," answered the preceptor, "I was explaining the Golden Bull to his Royal Highness."

"I 'll Golden Bull you, you rascal!" roared the Majesty of Prussia. Up went the king's cane; away ran the terrified instructor; and Frederic's classical studies ended forever. He now and then affected to quote Latin sentences, and produced such exquisitely Ciceronian phrases as these: "Stante pede morire;" "De gustibus non est disputandus;" "Tot verbas tot spondera." Of Italian he had not enough to read a page of Metastasio with ease; and of the Spanish and English he did not, as far as we are aware, understand a single word.

As the highest human compositions to which he had access were those of the French writers, it is not strange that his admiration for those writers should have been unbounded. His ambitious and eager temper early prompted him to imitate what he admired. The wish, perhaps, dearest to his heart was that he might rank among the masters of French rhetoric and poetry. He wrote prose and verse as indefatigably as if he had been a starving hack of Cave or Osborn; but nature, which had bestowed on him in a large measure the talents of a captain and of an administrator, had withheld from him those higher and rarer gifts without which industry labors in vain to produce immortal eloquence

and song. And, indeed, had he been blessed with more imagination, wit, and fertility of thought than he appears to have had, he would still have been subject to one great disadvantage, which would, in all probability, have forever prevented him from taking a high place among men of letters. He had not the full command of any language. There was no machine of thought which he could employ with ease, confidence, and freedom. He had German enough to scold his servants or to give the word of command to his grenadiers ; but his grammar and pronunciation were extremely bad. He found it difficult to make out the meaning even of the simplest German poetry. On one occasion a version of Racine's Iphigénie was read to him. He held the French original in his hand, but was forced to own that even with such help he could not understand the translation. Yet though he had neglected his mother-tongue in order to bestow all his attention on French, his French was, after all, the French of a foreigner. It was necessary for him to have always at his beck some men of letters from Paris to point out the solecisms and false rhymes of which, to the last, he was frequently guilty. Even had he possessed the poetic faculty, of which, as far as we can judge, he was utterly destitute, the want of a language would have prevented him from being a great poet. No noble work of imagination, as far as we recollect, was ever composed by any man, except in a dialect which he had learned without remembering how or when, and which he had spoken with perfect ease before he had ever analyzed its structure. Romans of great abilities wrote Greek verses ; but how many of those verses have deserved to live ? Many men of eminent genius have in modern times

written Latin poems ; but, as far as we are aware, none of those poems, not even Milton's, can be ranked in the first class of art, or even very high in the second. It is not strange, therefore, that in the French verses of Frederic we can find nothing beyond the reach of any man of good parts and industry, nothing above the level of Newdigate and Seatonian poetry. His best pieces may perhaps rank with the worst in Dodsley's collection. In history he succeeded better. We do not, indeed, find in any part of his voluminous Memoirs either deep reflection or vivid painting. But the narrative is distinguished by clearness, conciseness, good sense, and a certain air of truth and simplicity which is singularly graceful in a man who, having done great things, sits down to relate them. On the whole, however, none of his writings are so agreeable to us as his Letters, particularly those which are written with earnestness and are not embroidered with verses.

It is not strange that a young man devoted to literature, and acquainted only with the literature of France, should have looked with profound veneration on the genius of Voltaire. " A man who has never seen the sun," says Calderon, in one of his charming comedies, " cannot be blamed for thinking that no glory can exceed that of the moon. A man who has seen neither moon nor sun cannot be blamed for talking of the unrivalled brightness of the morning-star." Had Frederic been able to read Homer and Milton, or even Virgil and Tasso, his admiration of the Henriade would prove that he was utterly destitute of the power of discerning what is excellent in art. Had he been familiar with Sophocles or Shakspeare, we should have expected him to appreciate Zaire more justly. Had he been able to

study Thucydides and Tacitus in the original Greek and Latin, he would have known that there were heights in the eloquence of history far beyond the reach of the author of the Life of Charles the Twelfth. But the finest heroic poem, several of the most powerful tragedies, and the most brilliant and picturesque historical work that Frederic had ever read were Voltaire's. Such high and various excellence moved the young prince to adoration. The opinions of Voltaire on religious and philosophical questions had not yet been fully exhibited to the public. At a later period, when an exile from his country and at open war with the Church, he spoke out. But when Frederic was at Rheinsberg, Voltaire was still a courtier ; and, though he could not always curb his petulant wit, he had as yet published nothing that could exclude him from Versailles, and little that a divine of the mild and generous school of Grotius and Tillotson might not read with pleasure. In the Henriade, in Zaire, and in Alzire, Christian piety is exhibited in the most amiable form ; and, some years after the period of which we are writing, a pope condescended to accept the dedication of Mahomet. The real sentiments of the poet, however, might be clearly perceived by a keen eye through the decent disguise with which he veiled them, and could not escape the sagacity of Frederic, who held similar opinions, and had been accustomed to practise similar dissimulation.

The prince wrote to his idol in the style of a worshipper ; and Voltaire replied with exquisite grace and address. A correspondence followed, which may be studied with advantage by those who wish to become proficients in the ignoble art of flattery. No man ever

paid compliments better than Voltaire. His sweetest confectionery had always a delicate yet stimulating flavor, which was delightful to palates wearied by the coarse preparations of inferior artists. It was only from his hand that so much sugar could be swallowed without making the swallower sick. Copies of verses, writing-desks, trinkets of amber, were exchanged between the friends. Frederic confided his writings to Voltaire, and Voltaire applauded as if Frederic had been Racine and Bossuet in one. One of his Royal Highness's performances was a refutation of Machiavelli. Voltaire undertook to convey it to the press. It was entitled the Anti-Machiavel, and was an edifying homily against rapacity, perfidy, arbitrary government, unjust war ; in short, against almost everything for which its author is now remembered among men.

The old King uttered now and then a ferocious growl at the diversions of Rheinsberg. But his health was broken ; his end was approaching ; and his vigor was impaired. He had only one pleasure left, that of seeing tall soldiers. He could always be propitiated by a present of a grenadier of six feet four or six feet five ; and such presents were from time to time judiciously offered by his son.

Early in the year 1740, Frederic William met death with a firmness and dignity worthy of a better and wiser man ; and Frederic, who had just completed his twenty-eighth year, became King of Prussia. His character was little understood. That he had good abilities, indeed, no person who had talked with him or corresponded with him could doubt. But the easy Epicurean life which he had led, his love of good cookery and good wine, of music, of conversation, of

light literature, led many to regard him as a sensual and intellectual voluptuary. His habit of canting about moderation, peace, liberty, and the happiness which a good mind derives from the happiness of others had imposed on some who should have known better. Those who thought best of him expected a Telemachus after Fénelon's pattern. Others predicted the approach of a Medicean age—an age propitious to learning and art, and not unpropitious to pleasure. Nobody had the least suspicion that a tyrant of extraordinary military and political talents, of industry more extraordinary still, without fear, without faith, and without mercy, had ascended the throne.

The disappointment of Falstaff at his old boon-companion's coronation was not more bitter than that which awaited some of the inmates of Rheinsberg. They had long looked forward to the accession of their patron as to the event from which their own prosperity and greatness were to date. They had at last reached the promised land—the land which they had figured to themselves as flowing with milk and honey—and they found it a desert. "No more of these fooleries," was the short, sharp admonition given by Frederic to one of them. It soon became plain that, in the most important points, the new sovereign bore a strong family likeness to his predecessor. There was, indeed, a wide difference between the father and the son as respected extent and vigor of intellect, speculative opinions, amusements, studies, outward demeanor. But the groundwork of the character was the same in both. To both were common the love of order, the love of business, the military taste, the parsimony, the imperious spirit, the temper irritable even to ferocity, the pleasure

in the pain and humiliation of others. But these propensities had in Frederic William partaken of the general unsoundness of his mind, and wore a very different aspect when found in company with the strong and cultivated understanding of his successor. Thus, for example, Frederic was as anxious as any prince could be about the efficiency of his army. But this anxiety never degenerated into a monomania like that which had led his father to pay fancy prices for giants. Frederic was as thrifty about money as any prince or any private man ought to be. But he did not conceive, like his father, that it was worth while to eat unwholesome cabbages for the purpose of saving four or five rix-dollars in the year. Frederic was, we fear, as malevolent as his father ; but Frederic's wit enabled him often to show his malevolence in ways more decent than those to which his father resorted, and to inflict misery and degradation by a taunt instead of a blow. Frederic, it is true, by no means relinquished his hereditary privilege of kicking and cudgelling. His practice, however, as to that matter differed in some important respects from his father's. To Frederic William, the mere circumstance that any persons whatever, men, women, or children, Prussians or foreigners, were within reach of his toes and of his cane appeared to be a sufficient reason for proceeding to belabor them. Frederic required provocation as well as vicinity; nor was he ever known to inflict this paternal species of correction on any but his born subjects ; though on one occasion M. Thiébault had reason, during a few seconds, to anticipate the high honor of being an exception to this general rule.

The character of Frederic was still very imperfectly

understood either by his subjects or by his neighbors, when events occurred which exhibited it in a strong light. A few months after his accession died Charles the Sixth, Emperor of Germany, the last descendant, in the male line, of the House of Austria.

Charles left no son, and had, long before his death, relinquished all hopes of male issue. During the latter part of his life, his principal object had been to secure to his descendants in the female line the many crowns of the House of Hapsburg. With this view he had promulgated a new law of succession, widely celebrated throughout Europe under the name of the Pragmatic Sanction. By virtue of this law his daughter, the Archduchess Maria Theresa, wife of Francis of Lorraine, succeeded to the dominions of her ancestors.

No sovereign has ever taken possession of a throne by a clearer title. All the politics of the Austrian cabinet had during twenty years been directed to one single end—the settlement of the succession. From every person whose rights could be considered as injuriously affected, renunciations in the most solemn form had been obtained. The new law had been ratified by the Estates of all the kingdoms and principalities which made up the great Austrian monarchy. England, France, Spain, Russia, Poland, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, the Germanic body, had bound themselves by treaty to maintain the Pragmatic Sanction. That instrument was placed under the protection of the public faith of the whole civilized world.

Even if no positive stipulations on this subject had existed, the arrangement was one which no good man would have been willing to disturb. It was a peaceable arrangement. It was an arrangement acceptable

to the great population whose happiness was chiefly concerned. It was an arrangement which made no change in the distribution of power among the states of Christendom. It was an arrangement which could be set aside only by means of a general war ; and if it were set aside, the effect would be that the equilibrium of Europe would be deranged, that the loyal and patriotic feelings of millions would be cruelly outraged, and that great provinces which had been united for centuries would be torn from each other by main force.

The sovereigns of Europe were, therefore, bound by every obligation which those who are intrusted with power over their fellow-creatures ought to hold sacred to respect and defend the rights of the Archduchess. Her situation and her personal qualities were such as might be expected to move the mind of any generous man to pity, admiration, and chivalrous tenderness. She was in her twenty-fourth year. Her form was majestic, her features beautiful, her countenance sweet and animated, her voice musical, her deportment gracious and dignified. In all domestic relations she was without reproach. She was married to a husband whom she loved, and was on the point of giving birth to a child, when death deprived her of her father. The loss of a parent and the new cares of empire were too much for her in the delicate state of her health. Her spirits were depressed, and her cheek lost its bloom. Yet it seemed that she had little cause for anxiety. It seemed that justice, humanity, and the faith of treaties would have their due weight, and that the settlement so solemnly guaranteed would be quietly carried into effect. England, Russia, Poland, and Holland declared in form their intention to adhere to

their engagements. The French ministers made a verbal declaration to the same effect. But from no quarter did the young Queen of Hungary receive stronger assurances of friendship and support than from the King of Prussia.

Yet the King of Prussia, the Anti-Machiavel, had already fully determined to commit the great crime of violating his plighted faith, of robbing the ally whom he was bound to defend, and of plunging all Europe into a long, bloody, and desolating war ; and all this for no end whatever except that he might extend his dominions and see his name in the gazettes. He determined to assemble a great army with speed and secrecy, to invade Silesia before Maria Theresa should be apprised of his design, and to add that rich province to his kingdom.

We will not condescend to refute at length the pleas which the compiler of the Memoirs before us has copied from Doctor Preuss. They amount to this, that the House of Brandenburg had some ancient pretensions to Silesia, and had in the previous century been compelled, by hard usage on the part of the Court of Vienna, to waive those pretensions. It is certain that, whoever might orginally have been in the right, Prussia had submitted. Prince after prince of the House of Brandenburg had acquiesced in the existing arrangement. Nay, the Court of Berlin had recently been allied to that of Vienna, and had guaranteed the integrity of the Austrian states. Is it not perfectly clear that if antiquated claims are to be set up against recent treaties and long possession, the world can never be at peace for a day ? The laws of all nations have wisely established a time of limitation, after which titles, how-

ever illegitimate in their origin, cannot be questioned. It is felt by everybody that to eject a person from his estate on the ground of some injustice committed in the time of the Tudors would produce all the evils which result from arbitrary confiscation, and would make all property insecure. It concerns the commonwealth—so runs the legal maxim—that there be an end of litigation. And surely this maxim is at least equally applicable to the great commonwealth of states ; for in that commonwealth litigation means the devastation of provinces, the suspension of trade and industry, sieges like those of Badajoz and St. Sebastian, pitched fields like those of Eylau and Borodino. We hold that the transfer of Norway from Denmark to Sweden was an unjustifiable proceeding ; but would the King of Denmark be therefore justified in landing, without any new provocation, in Norway, and commencing military operations there ? The King of Holland thinks, no doubt, that he was unjustly deprived of the Belgian provinces. Grant that it were so. Would he, therefore, be justified in marching with an army on Brussels ? The case against Frederic was still stronger, inasmuch as the injustice of which he complained had been committed more than a century before. Nor must it be forgotten that he owed the highest personal obligations to the House of Austria. It may be doubted whether his life had not been preserved by the intercession of the prince whose daughter he was about to plunder. To do the King justice, he pretended to no more virtue than he had. In manifestoes he might, for form's sake, insert some idle stories about his antiquated claim on Silesia ; but in his conversations and Memoirs he took a very different tone. His own words are : " Ambition, in-

terest, the desire of making people talk about me, carried the day, and I decided for war."

Having resolved on his course, he acted with ability and vigor. It was impossible wholly to conceal his preparations; for throughout the Prussian territories regiments, guns, and baggage were in motion. The Austrian envoy at Berlin apprised his court of these facts, and expressed a suspicion of Frederic's designs; but the ministers of Maria Theresa refused to give credit to so black an imputation on a young prince who was known chiefly by his high professions of integrity and philanthropy. "We will not," they wrote, "we cannot, believe it."

In the meantime the Prussian forces had been assembled. Without any declaration of war, without any demand for reparation, in the very act of pouring forth compliments and assurances of good-will, Frederic commenced hostilities. Many thousand of his troops were actually in Silesia before the Queen of Hungary knew that he had set up any claim to any part of her territories. At length he sent her a message which could be regarded only as an insult. If she would but let him have Silesia, he would, he said, stand by her against any power which should try to deprive her of her other dominions; as if he were not already bound to stand by her, or as if his new promise could be of more value than the old one.

It was the depth of winter. The cold was severe, and the roads heavy with mire. But the Prussians pressed on. Resistance was impossible. The Austrian army was then neither numerous nor efficient. The small portion of that army which lay in Silesia was unprepared for hostilities. Glogau was blockaded; Bres-

lau opened its gates; Ohlau was evacuated. A few scattered garrisons still held out; but the whole open country was subjugated. No enemy ventured to encounter the King in the field; and before the end of January, 1741, he returned to receive the congratulations of his subjects at Berlin.

Had the Silesian question been merely a question between Frederic and Maria Theresa, it would be impossible to acquit the Prussian King of gross perfidy. But when we consider the effects which his policy produced, and could not fail to produce, on the whole community of civilized nations, we are compelled to pronounce a condemnation still more severe. Till he began the war, it seemed possible, even probable, that the peace of the world would be preserved. The plunder of the great Austrian heritage was, indeed, a strong temptation; and in more than one cabinet ambitious schemes were already meditated. But the treaties by which the Pragmatic Sanction had been guaranteed were express and recent. To throw all Europe into confusion for a purpose clearly unjust was no light matter. England was true to her engagements. The voice of Fleury had always been for peace. He had a conscience. He was now in extreme old age, and was unwilling, after a life which, when his situation was considered, must be pronounced singularly pure, to carry the fresh stain of a great crime before the tribunal of his God. Even the vain and unprincipled Belleisle, whose whole life was one wild day-dream of conquest and spoliation, felt that France, bound as she was by solemn stipulations, could not, without disgrace, make a direct attack on the Austrian dominions. Charles, Elector of Bavaria, pretended that he had a

right to a large part of the inheritance which the Pragmatic Sanction gave to the Queen of Hungary; but he was not sufficiently powerful to move without support. It might, therefore, not unreasonably be expected that, after a short period of restlessness, all the potentates of Christendom would acquiesce in the arrangements made by the late Emperor. But the selfish rapacity of the King of Prussia gave the signal to his neighbors. His example quieted their sense of shame. His success led them to underrate the difficulty of dismembering the Austrian monarchy. The whole world sprang to arms. On the head of Frederic is all the blood which was shed in a war which raged during many years, and in every quarter of the globe—the blood of the column of Fontenoy, the blood of the mountaineers who were slaughtered at Culloden. The evils produced by his wickedness were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown; and, in order that he might rob a neighbor whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the great lakes of North America.

Silesia had been occupied without a battle ; but the Austrian troops were advancing to the relief of the fortresses which still held out. In the spring Frederic rejoined his army. He had seen little of war, and had never commanded any great body of men in the field. It is not, therefore, strange that his first military operations showed little of that skill which, at a later period, was the admiration of Europe. What connoisseurs say of some pictures painted by Raphael in his youth may be said of this campaign. It was in Frederic's early bad manner. Fortunately for him, the generals to whom he was opposed were men of small capacity. The dis-

cipline of his own troops, particularly of the infantry, was unequalled in that age ; and some able and experienced officers were at hand to assist him with their advice. Of these, the most distinguished was Field-marshal Schwerin, a brave adventurer of Pomeranian extraction, who had served half the governments in Europe, had borne the commissions of the States-General of Holland and of the Duke of Mecklenburg, had fought under Marlborough at Blenheim, and had been with Charles the Twelfth at Bender.

Frederic's first battle was fought at Molwitz ; and never did the career of a great commander open in a more inauspicious manner. His army was victorious. Not only, however, did he not establish his title to the character of an able general, but he was so unfortunate as to make it doubtful whether he possessed the vulgar courage of a soldier. The cavalry, which he commanded in person, was put to flight. Unaccustomed to the tumult and carnage of a field of battle, he lost his self-possession, and listened too readily to those who urged him to save himself. His English gray carried him many miles from the field; while Schwerin, though wounded in two places, manfully upheld the day. The skill of the old Field-marshal and the steadiness of the Prussian battalions prevailed ; and the Austrian army was driven from the field with the loss of eight thousand men.

The news was carried late at night to a mill in which the King had taken shelter. It gave him a bitter pang. He was successful ; but he owed his success to dispositions which others had made, and to the valor of men who had fought while he was flying. So unpromising was the first appearance of the greatest warrior of that age.

The battle of Molwitz was the signal for a general explosion throughout Europe. Bavaria took up arms. France, not yet declaring herself a principal in the war, took part in it as an ally of Bavaria. The two great statesmen to whom mankind had owed many years of tranquillity disappeared about this time from the scene, but not till they had both been guilty of the weakness of sacrificing their sense of justice and their love of peace to the vain hope of preserving their power. Fleury, sinking under age and infirmity, was borne down by the impetuosity of Belleisle. Walpole retired from the service of his ungrateful country to his woods and paintings at Houghton ; and his power devolved on the daring and eccentric Carteret. As were the ministers, so were the nations. Thirty years during which Europe had, with few interruptions, enjoyed repose had prepared the public mind for great military efforts. A new generation had grown up which could not remember the siege of Turin or the slaughter of Malplaquet, which knew war by nothing but its trophies, and which, while it looked with pride on the tapestries at Blenheim or the statue in the Place of Victories, little thought by what privations, by what waste of private fortunes, by how many bitter tears, conquests must be purchased.

For a time fortune seemed adverse to the Queen of Hungary. Frederic invaded Moravia. The French and Bavarians penetrated into Bohemia, and were there joined by the Saxons. Prague was taken. The Elector of Bavaria was raised by the suffrages of his colleagues to the imperial throne, a throne which the practice of centuries had almost entitled the House of Austria to regard as an hereditary possession.

Yet was the spirit of the haughty daughter of the Cæsars unbroken. Hungary was still hers by an unquestionable title; and, although her ancestors had found Hungary the most mutinous of all their kingdoms, she resolved to trust herself to the fidelity of a people, rude indeed, turbulent, and impatient of oppression, but brave, generous, and simple-hearted. In the midst of distress and peril, she had given birth to a son, afterwards the Emperor Joseph the Second. Scarcely had she risen from her couch, when she hastened to Presburg. There, in the sight of an innumerable multitude, she was crowned with the crown and robed with the robe of St. Stephen. No spectator could restrain his tears when the beautiful young mother, still weak from child-bearing, rode, after the fashion of her fathers, up the Mount of Defiance, unsheathed the ancient sword of State, shook it towards north and south, east and west, and, with a glow on her pale face, challenged the four corners of the world to dispute her rights and those of her boy. At the first sitting of the Diet she appeared clad in deep mourning for her father, and in pathetic and dignified words implored her people to support her just cause. Magnates and deputies sprang up, half drew their sabres, and with eager voices vowed to stand by her with their lives and fortunes. Till then her firmness had never once forsaken her before the public eye; but at that shout she sank down upon her throne and wept aloud. Still more touching was the sight when, a few days later, she came again before the Estates of her realm, and held up before them the little Archduke in her arms. Then it was that the enthusiasm of Hungary broke forth into that war-cry which soon resounded

throughout Europe, "Let us die for our Queen, Maria Theresa!"

In the meantime, Frederic was meditating a change of policy. He had no wish to raise France to supreme power on the Continent at the expense of the House of Hapsburg. His first object was to rob the Queen of Hungary. His second object was that, if possible, nobody should rob her but himself. He had entered into engagements with the powers leagued against Austria; but these engagements were, in his estimation, of no more force than the guarantee formerly given to the Pragmatic Sanction. His plan now was to secure his share of the plunder by betraying his accomplices. Maria Theresa was little inclined to listen to any such compromise; but the English government represented to her so strongly the necessity of buying off Frederic that she agreed to negotiate. The negotiation would not, however, have ended in a treaty, had not the arms of Frederic been crowned with a second victory. Prince Charles of Lorraine, brother-in-law to Maria Theresa, a bold and active though unfortunate general, gave battle to the Prussians at Chotusitz, and was defeated. The King was still only a learner of the military art. He acknowledged at a later period that his success on this occasion was to be attributed, not at all to his own generalship, but solely to the valor and steadiness of his troops. He completely effaced, however, by his personal courage and energy the stain which Molwitz had left on his reputation.

A peace, concluded under the English mediation, was the fruit of this battle. Maria Theresa ceded Silesia: Frederic abandoned his allies; Saxony followed his example; and the Queen was left at liberty

to turn her whole force against France and Bavaria. She was everywhere triumphant. The French were compelled to evacuate Bohemia, and with difficulty effected their escape. The whole line of their retreat might be tracked by the corpses of thousands who had died of cold, fatigue, and hunger. Many of those who reached their country carried with them the seeds of death. Bavaria was overrun with bands of ferocious warriors from that bloody debatable land which lies on the frontier between Christendom and Islam. The terrible names of the Pandoor, the Croat, and the Hussar then first became familiar to Western Europe. The unfortunate Charles of Bavaria, vanquished by Austria, betrayed by Prussia, driven from his hereditary states, and neglected by his allies, was hurried by shame and remorse to an untimely end. An English army appeared in the heart of Germany, and defeated the French at Dettingen. The Austrian captains already began to talk of completing the work of Marlborough and Eugene, and of compelling France to relinquish Alsace and the Three Bishoprics.

The Court of Versailles, in this peril, looked to Frederic for help. He had been guilty of two great treasons ; perhaps he might be induced to commit a third. The Duchess of Chateauroux then held the chief influence over the feeble Louis. She determined to send an agent to Berlin ; and Voltaire was selected for the mission. He eagerly undertook the task ; for, while his literary fame filled all Europe, he was troubled with a childish craving for political distinction. He was vain, and not without reason, of his address, and of his insinuating eloquence ; and he flattered himself that he possessed boundless influence over

the King of Prussia. The truth was that he knew as yet only one corner of Frederic's character. He was well acquainted with all the petty vanities and affectations of the poetaster; but was not aware that these foibles were united with all the talents and vices which lead to success in active life, and that the unlucky versifier who pestered him with reams of middling Alexandrines was the most vigilant, suspicious, and severe of politicians.

Voltaire was received with every mark of respect and friendship, was lodged in the palace, and had a seat daily at the royal table. The negotiation was of an extraordinary description. Nothing can be conceived more whimsical than the conferences which took place between the first literary man and the first practical man of the age, whom a strange weakness had induced to exchange their parts. The great poet would talk of nothing but treaties and guarantees, and the great King of nothing but metaphors and rhymes. On one occasion Voltaire put into his Majesty's hands a paper on the state of Europe, and received it back with verses scrawled on the margin. In secret they both laughed at each other. Voltaire did not spare the King's poems; and the King has left on record his opinion of Voltaire's diplomacy. "He had no credentials," says Frederic, "and the whole mission was a joke, a mere farce."

But what the influence of Voltaire could not effect, the rapid progress of the Austrian arms effected. If it should be in the power of Maria Theresa and George the Second to dictate terms of peace to France, what chance was there that Prussia would long retain Silesia? Frederic's conscience told him that he had acted per-

fidiously and inhumanly towards the Queen of Hungary. That her resentment was strong she had given ample proof; and of her respect for treaties he judged by his own. Guarantees, he said, were mere filigree —pretty to look at, but too brittle to bear the slightest pressure. He thought it his safest course to ally himself closely to France and again to attack the Empress Queen. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1744, without notice, without any decent pretext, he recommenced hostilities, marched through the electorate of Saxony without troubling himself about the permission of the Elector, invaded Bohemia, took Prague, and even menaced Vienna.

It was now that, for the first time, he experienced the inconstancy of fortune. An Austrian army under Charles of Lorraine threatened his communications with Silesia. Saxony was all in arms behind him. He found it necessary to save himself by a retreat. He afterwards owned that his failure was the natural effect of his own blunders. No general, he said, had ever committed greater faults. It must be added that to the reverses of this campaign he always ascribed his subsequent successes. It was in the midst of difficulty and disgrace that he caught the first clear glimpse of the military art.

The memorable year of 1745 followed. The war raged by sea and land, in Italy, in Germany, and in Flanders; and even England, after many years of profound internal quiet, saw, for the last time, hostile armies set in battle array against each other. This year is memorable in the life of Frederic as the date at which his novitiate in the art of war may be said to have terminated. There have been great captains

whose precocious and self-taught military skill resembled intuition. Condé, Clive, and Napoleon are examples. But Frederic was not one of these brilliant portents. His proficiency in military science was simply the proficiency which a man of vigorous faculties makes in any science to which he applies his mind with earnestness and industry. It was at Hohenfriedberg that he first proved how much he had profited by his errors and their consequences. His victory on that day was chiefly due to his skilful dispositions, and convinced Europe that the prince who, a few years before, had stood aghast in the rout of Molwitz had attained in the military art a mastery equalled by none of his contemporaries, or equalled by Saxe alone. The victory of Hohenfriedberg was speedily followed by that of Sorr.

In the meantime the arms of France had been victorious in the Low Countries. Frederic had no longer reason to fear that Maria Theresa would be able to give law to Europe, and he began to meditate a fourth breach of his engagements. The Court of Versailles was alarmed and mortified. A letter of earnest expostulation, in the handwriting of Louis, was sent to Berlin, but in vain. In the autumn of 1745, Frederic made peace with England, and, before the close of the year, with Austria also. The pretensions of Charles of Bavaria could present no obstacle to an accommodation. That unhappy prince was no more ; and Francis of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, was raised, with the general assent of the Germanic body, to the imperial throne.

Prussia was again at peace ; but the European war lasted till, in the year 1748, it was terminated by the

treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Of all the powers that had taken part in it, the only gainer was Frederic. Not only had he added to his patrimony the fine province of Silesia : he had, by his unprincipled dexterity, succeeded so well in alternately depressing the scale of Austria and that of France that he was generally regarded as holding the balance of Europe—a high dignity for one who ranked lowest among kings, and whose great-grandfather had been no more than a margrave. By the public the King of Prussia was considered as a politician destitute alike of morality and decency, insatiably rapacious, and shamelessly false ; nor was the public much in the wrong. He was, at the same time, allowed to be a man of parts, a rising general, a shrewd negotiator and administrator. Those qualities wherein he surpassed all mankind were as yet unknown to others or to himself ; for they were qualities which shine out only on a dark ground. His career had hitherto, with little interruption, been prosperous ; and it was only in adversity—in adversity which seemed without hope or resource, in adversity which would have overwhelmed even men celebrated for strength of mind—that his real greatness could be shown.

He had, from the commencement of his reign, applied himself to public business after a fashion unknown among kings. Louis the Fourteenth, indeed, had been his own prime-minister, and had exercised a general superintendence over all the departments of the government ; but this was not sufficient for Frederic. He was not content with being his own prime-minister, he would be his own sole minister. Under him there was no room, not merely for a Richelieu or a Mazarine,

but for a Colbert, a Louvois, or a Torcy. A love of labor for its own sake, a restless and insatiable longing to dictate, to intermeddle, to make his power felt, a profound scorn and distrust of his fellow-creatures, made him unwilling to ask counsel, to confide important secrets, to delegate ample powers. The highest functionaries under his government were mere clerks, and were not so much trusted by him as valuable clerks are often trusted by the heads of departments. He was his own treasurer, his own commander-in-chief, his own intendant of public works, his own minister for trade and justice, for home affairs and foreign affairs, his own master of the horse, steward, and chamberlain. Matters of which no chief of an office in any other government would ever hear were, in this singular monarchy, decided by the King in person. If a traveller wished for a good place to see a review, he had to write to Frederic, and received next day from a royal messenger Frederic's answer signed by Frederic's own hand. This was an extravagant, a morbid activity. The public business would assuredly have been better done if each department had been put under a man of talents and integrity, and if the King had contented himself with a general control. In this manner the advantages which belong to unity of design and the advantages which belong to the division of labor would have been to a great extent combined. But such a system would not have suited the peculiar temper of Frederic. He could tolerate no will, no reason, in the State save his own. He wished for no abler assistance than that of penmen who had just understanding enough to translate and transcribe, to make out his scrawls, and to put his concise Yes and No into an

official form. Of the higher intellectual faculties, there is as much in a copying-machine or a lithographic press as he required from a secretary of the cabinet.

His own exertions were such as were hardly to be expected from a human body or a human mind. At Potsdam, his ordinary residence, he rose at three in summer and four in winter. A page soon appeared with a large basket full of all the letters which had arrived for the King by the last courier—despatches from ambassadors, reports from officers of revenue, plans of buildings, proposals for draining marshes, complaints from persons who thought themselves aggrieved, applications from persons who wanted titles, military commissions, and civil situations. He examined the seals with a keen eye ; for he was never for a moment free from the suspicion that some fraud might be practised on him. Then he read the letters, divided them into several packets, and signified his pleasure, generally by a mark, often by two or three words, now and then by some cutting epigram. By eight he had generally finished this part of his task. The adjutant-general was then in attendance, and received instructions for the day as to all the military arrangements of the kingdom. Then the King went to review his guards, not as kings ordinarily review their guards, but with the minute attention and severity of an old drill-sergeant. In the meantime the four cabinet secretaries had been employed in answering the letters on which the King had that morning signified his will. These unhappy men were forced to work all the year round like negro slaves in the time of the sugar-crop. They never had a holiday. They never knew what it was to dine. It was necessary that be-

fore they stirred they should finish the whole of their work. The King, always on his guard against treachery, took from the heap a handful of letters at random and looked into them to see whether his instructions had been exactly followed. This was no bad security against foul play on the part of the secretaries ; for if one of them were detected in a trick, he might think himself fortunate if he escaped with five years of imprisonment in a dungeon. Frederic then signed the replies, and all were sent off the same evening.

The general principles on which this strange government was conducted deserve attention. The policy of Frederic was essentially the same as his father's ; but Frederic, while he carried that policy to lengths to which his father never thought of carrying it, cleared it, at the same time, from the absurdities with which his father had encumbered it. The King's first object was to have a great, efficient, and well-trained army. He had a kingdom which in extent and population was hardly in the second rank of European powers ; and yet he aspired to a place not inferior to that of the sovereigns of England, France, and Austria. For that end it was necessary that Prussia should be all sting. Louis the Fifteenth, with five times as many subjects as Frederic, and more than five times as large a revenue, had not a more formidable army. The proportion which the soldiers in Prussia bore to the people seems hardly credible. Of the males in the vigor of life, a seventh part were probably under arms ; and this great force had, by drilling, by reviewing, and by the unsparing use of cane and scourge, been taught to perform all evolutions with a rapidity and a precision which would have astonished Villars or Eugene. The

elevated feelings which are necessary to the best kind of army were then wanting to the Prussian service. In those ranks were not found the religious and political enthusiasm which inspired the pikemen of Cromwell; the patriotic ardor, the thirst of glory, the devotion to a great leader, which inflamed the Old Guard of Napoleon. But in all the mechanical parts of the military calling the Prussians were as superior to the English and French troops of that day as the English and French troops to a rustic militia.

Though the pay of the Prussian soldier was small, though every rix-dollar of extraordinary charge was scrutinized by Frederic with a vigilance and suspicion such as Mr. Joseph Hume never brought to the examination of an army estimate, the expense of such an establishment was, for the means of the country, enormous. In order that it might not be utterly ruinous, it was necessary that every other expense should be cut down to the lowest possible point. Accordingly Frederic, though his dominions bordered on the sea, had no navy. He neither had nor wished to have colonies. His judges, his fiscal officers, were meanly paid. His ministers at foreign courts walked on foot, or drove shabby old carriages till the axletrees gave way. Even to his highest diplomatic agents, who resided at London and Paris, he allowed less than a thousand pounds sterling a year. The royal household was managed with a frugality unusual in the establishments of opulent subjects, unexampled in any other palace. The King loved good eating and drinking, and during great part of his life took pleasure in seeing his table surrounded by guests; yet the whole charge of his kitchen was brought within the sum of two thou-

sand pounds sterling a year. He examined every extraordinary item with a care which might be thought to suit the mistress of a boarding-house better than a great prince. When more than four rix-dollars were asked of him for a hundred oysters, he stormed as if he had heard that one of his generals had sold a fortress to the Empress Queen. Not a bottle of champagne was uncorked without his express order. The game of the royal parks and forests, a serious head of expenditure in most kingdoms, was to him a source of profit. The whole was farmed out; and though the farmers were almost ruined by their contract, the King would grant them no remission. His wardrobe consisted of one fine gala dress which lasted him all his life, of two or three old coats fit for Monmouth Street, of yellow waistcoats soiled with snuff, and of huge boots embrowned by time. One taste alone sometimes allured him beyond the limits of parsimony—nay, even beyond the limits of prudence—the taste for building. In all other things his economy was such as we might call by a harsher name if we did not reflect that his funds were drawn from a heavily taxed people, and that it was impossible for him, without excessive tyranny, to keep up at once a formidable army and a splendid court.

Considered as an administrator, Frederic had undoubtedly many titles to praise. Order was strictly maintained throughout his dominions. Property was secure. A great liberty of speaking and of writing was allowed. Confident in the irresistible strength derived from a great army, the King looked down on malcontents and libellers with a wise disdain, and gave little encouragement to spies and informers. When he

was told of the disaffection of one of his subjects, he merely asked, "How many thousand men can he bring into the field?" He once saw a crowd staring at something on a wall. He rode up and found that the object of curiosity was a scurrilous placard against himself. The placard had been posted up so high that it was not easy to read it. Frederic ordered his attendants to take it down and put it lower. "My people and I," he said, "have come to an agreement which satisfies us both. They are to say what they please, and I am to do what I please." No person would have dared to publish in London satires on George the Second approaching to the atrocity of those satires on Frederic which the booksellers of Berlin sold with impunity. One bookseller sent to the palace a copy of the most stinging lampoon that perhaps was ever written in the world—the Memoirs of Voltaire, published by Beaumarchais—and asked for his Majesty's orders. "Do not advertise it in an offensive manner," said the King, "but sell it by all means. I hope it will pay you well." Even among statesmen accustomed to the license of a free press, such steadfastness of mind as this is not very common.

It is due also to the memory of Frederic to say that he earnestly labored to secure to his people the great blessing of cheap and speedy justice. He was one of the first rulers who abolished the cruel and absurd practice of torture. No sentence of death pronounced by the ordinary tribunals was executed without his sanction; and his sanction, except in cases of murder, was rarely given. Towards his troops he acted in a very different manner. Military offences were punished with such barbarous scourging that to be shot

was considered by the Prussian soldier as a secondary punishment. Indeed, the principle which pervaded Frederic's whole policy was this, that the more severely the army is governed, the safer it is to treat the rest of the community with lenity.

Religious persecution was unknown under his government, unless some foolish and unjust restrictions which lay upon the Jews may be regarded as forming an exception. His policy with respect to the Catholics of Silesia presented an honorable contrast to the policy which, under very similar circumstances, England long followed with respect to the Catholics of Ireland. Every form of religion and irreligion found an asylum in his states. The scoffer whom the parliaments of France had sentenced to a cruel death was consoled by a commission in the Prussian service. The Jesuit who could show his face nowhere else, who in Britain was still subject to penal laws, who was proscribed by France, Spain, Portugal, and Naples, who had been given up even by the Vatican, found safety and the means of subsistence in the Prussian dominions.

Most of the vices of Frederic's administration resolve themselves into one vice—the spirit of meddling. The indefatigable activity of his intellect, his dictatorial temper, his military habits—all inclined him to this great fault. He drilled his people as he drilled his grenadiers. Capital and industry were diverted from their natural direction by a crowd of preposterous regulations. There was a monopoly of coffee, a monopoly of tobacco, a monopoly of refined sugar. The public money, of which the King was generally so sparing, was lavishly spent in ploughing bogs, in planting mulberry trees amidst the sand, in bringing sheep from

Spain to improve the Saxon wool, in bestowing prizes for fine yarn, in building manufactories of porcelain, manufactories of carpets, manufactories of hardware, manufactories of lace. Neither the experience of other rulers nor his own could ever teach him that something more than an edict and a grant of public money was required to create a Lyons, a Brussels, or a Birmingham.

For his commercial policy, however, there was some excuse. He had on his side illustrious examples and popular prejudice. Grievously as he erred, he erred in company with his age. In other departments his meddling was altogether without apology. He interfered with the course of justice as well as with the course of trade, and set up his own crude notions of equity against the law as expounded by the unanimous voice of the gravest magistrates. It never occurred to him that men whose lives were passed in adjudicating on questions of civil right were more likely to form correct opinions on such questions than a prince whose attention was divided among a thousand objects, and who had never read a law-book through. The resistance opposed to him by the tribunals inflamed him to fury. He reviled his Chancellor. He kicked the shins of his judges. He did not, it is true, intend to act unjustly. He firmly believed that he was doing right and defending the cause of the poor against the wealthy. Yet this well-meant meddling probably did far more harm than all the explosions of his evil passions during the whole of his long reign. We could make shift to live under a debauchee or a tyrant, but to be ruled by a busybody is more than human nature can bear.

The same passion for directing and regulating appeared in every part of the King's policy. Every lad

of a certain station in life was forced to go to certain schools within the Prussian dominions. If a young Prussian repaired, though but for a few weeks, to Leyden or Göttingen for the purpose of study, the offence was punished with civil disabilities, and sometimes with the confiscation of property. Nobody was to travel without the royal permission. If the permission were granted, the pocket-money of the tourist was fixed by royal ordinance. A merchant might take with him two hundred and fifty rix-dollars in gold, a noble was allowed to take four hundred ; for it may be observed, in passing, that Frederic studiously kept up the old distinction between the nobles and the community. In speculation he was a French philosopher, but in action a German prince. He talked and wrote about the privileges of blood in the style of Sieyès ; but in practice no chapter in the empire looked with keener eye to genealogies and quarterings.

Such was Frederic the Ruler. But there was another Frederic—the Frederic of Rheinsberg, the fiddler and flute-player, the poetaster and metaphysician. Amidst the cares of State the King had retained his passion for music, for reading, for writing, for literary society. To these amusements he devoted all the time that he could snatch from the business of war and government ; and perhaps more light is thrown on his character by what passed during his hours of relaxation than by his battles or his laws.

It was the just boast of Schiller that in his country no Augustus, no Lorenzo, had watched over the infancy of poetry. The rich and energetic language of Luther, driven by the Latin from the schools of pedants, and by the French from the palaces of kings, had taken

refuge among the people. Of the powers of that language Frederic had no notion. He generally spoke of it, and of those who used it, with the contempt of ignorance. His library consisted of French books ; at his table nothing was heard but French conversation. The associates of his hours of relaxation were, for the most part, foreigners. Britain furnished to the royal circle two distinguished men, born in the highest rank, and driven by civil dissensions from the land to which, under happier circumstances, their talents and virtues might have been a source of strength and glory. George Keith, Earl Mareschal of Scotland, had taken arms for the House of Stuart in 1715, and his younger brother James, then only seventeen years old, had fought gallantly by his side. When all was lost, they retired together to the Continent, roved from country to country, served under various standards, and so bore themselves as to win the respect and good-will of many who had no love for the Jacobite cause. Their long wanderings terminated at Potsdam ; nor had Frederic any associates who deserved or obtained so large a share of his esteem. They were not only accomplished men, but nobles and warriors, capable of serving him in war and diplomacy, as well as of amusing him at supper. Alone of all his companions, they appear never to have had reason to complain of his demeanor towards them. Some of those who knew the palace best pronounced that the Lord Mareschal was the only human being whom Frederic ever really loved.

Italy sent to the parties at Potsdam the ingenious and amiable Algarotti, and Bastiani, the most crafty, cautious, and servile of abbés. But the greater part of the society which Frederic had assembled round him

was drawn from France. Maupertuis had acquired some celebrity by the journey which he had made to Lapland for the purpose of ascertaining, by actual measurement, the shape of our planet. He was placed in the chair of the Academy of Berlin, an humble imitation of the renowned Academy of Paris. Baculard d'Arnaud, a young poet who was thought to have given promise of great things, had been induced to quit his country and to reside at the Prussian court. The Marquess d'Argens was among the King's favorite companions, on account, as it should seem, of the strong opposition between their characters. The parts of D'Argens were good, and his manners those of a finished French gentleman ; but his whole soul was dissolved in sloth, timidity, and self-indulgence. His was one of that abject class of minds which are superstitious without being religious. Hating Christianity with a rancor which made him incapable of rational inquiry, unable to see in the harmony and beauty of the universe the traces of divine power and wisdom, he was the slave of dreams and omens, would not sit down to table with thirteen in company, turned pale if the salt fell towards him, begged his guests not to cross their knives and forks on their plates, and would not for the world commence a journey on Friday. His health was a subject of constant anxiety to him. Whenever his head ached or his pulse beat quick, his dastardly fears and effeminate precautions were the jest of all Berlin. All this suited the King's purpose admirably. He wanted somebody by whom he might be amused, and whom he might despise. When he wished to pass half an hour in easy, polished conversation, D'Argens was an excellent companion ; when he

wanted to vent his spleen and contempt, D'Argens was an excellent butt.

With these associates, and others of the same class, Frederic loved to spend the time which he could steal from public cares. He wished his supper-parties to be gay and easy. He invited his guests to lay aside all restraint, and to forget that he was at the head of a hundred and sixty thousand soldiers, and was absolute master of the life and liberty of all who sat at meat with him. There was, therefore, at these parties the outward show of ease. The wit and learning of the company were ostentatiously displayed. The discussions on history and literature were often highly interesting. But the absurdity of all the religions known among men was the chief topic of conversation; and the audacity with which doctrines and names venerated throughout Christendom were treated on these occasions startled even persons accustomed to the society of French and English freethinkers. Real liberty, however, or real affection, was in this brilliant society not to be found. Absolute kings seldom have friends; and Frederic's faults were such as, even where perfect equality exists, make friendship exceedingly precarious. He had, indeed, many qualities which, on first acquaintance, were captivating. His conversation was lively; his manners, to those whom he desired to please, were even caressing. No man could flatter with more delicacy. No man succeeded more completely in inspiring those who approached him with vague hopes of some great advantage from his kindness. But under this fair exterior he was a tyrant, suspicious, disdainful, and malevolent. He had one taste which may be pardoned in a boy, but which,

when habitually and deliberately indulged by a man of mature age and strong understanding, is almost invariably the sign of a bad heart—a taste for severe practical jokes. If a courtier was fond of dress, oil was flung over his richest suit. If he was fond of money, some prank was invented to make him disburse more than he could spare. If he was hypochondriacal, he was made to believe that he had the dropsy. If he had particularly set his heart on visiting a place, a letter was forged to frighten him from going thither. These things, it may be said, are trifles. They are so ; but they are indications, not to be mistaken, of a nature to which the sight of human suffering and human degradation is an agreeable excitement.

Frederic had a keen eye for the foibles of others, and loved to communicate his discoveries. He had some talent for sarcasm, and considerable skill in detecting the sore places where sarcasm would be most acutely felt. His vanity as well as his malignity found gratification in the vexation and confusion of those who smarted under his caustic jests. Yet in truth his success on these occasions belonged quite as much to the king as to the wit. We read that Commodus descended, sword in hand, into the arena against a wretched gladiator armed only with a foil of lead, and, after shedding the blood of the helpless victim, struck medals to commemorate the inglorious victory. The triumphs of Frederic in the war of repartee were of much the same kind. How to deal with him was the most puzzling of questions. To appear constrained in his presence was to disobey his commands and to spoil his amusement. Yet if his associates were enticed by his graciousness to indulge in the familiarity of a cor-

dial intimacy, he was certain to make them repent of their presumption by some cruel humiliation. To resent his affronts was perilous ; yet not to resent them was to deserve and to invite them. In his view, those who mutinied were insolent and ungrateful; those who submitted were curs made to receive bones and kickings with the same fawning patience. It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how anything short of the rage of hunger should have induced men to bear the misery of being the associates of the Great King. It was no lucrative post. His Majesty was as severe and economical in his friendships as in the other charges of his establishment, and as unlikely to give a rix-dollar too much for his guests as for his dinners. The sum which he allowed to a poet or a philosopher was the very smallest sum for which such poet or philosopher could be induced to sell himself into slavery ; and the bondsman might think himself fortunate if what had been so grudgingly given was not, after years of suffering, rudely and arbitrarily withdrawn.

Potsdam was, in truth, what it was called by one of its most illustrious inmates, the Palace of Alcina. At the first glance it seemed to be a delightful spot, where every intellectual and physical enjoyment awaited the happy adventurer. Every new-comer was received with eager hospitality, intoxicated with flattery, encouraged to expect prosperity and greatness. It was in vain that a long succession of favorites who had entered that abode with delight and hope, and who, after a short term of delusive happiness, had been doomed to expiate their folly by years of wretchedness and degradation, raised their voices to warn the aspirant who approached the charmed threshold.

Some had wisdom enough to discover the truth early, and spirit enough to fly without looking back ; others lingered on to a cheerless and unhonored old age. We have no hesitation in saying that the poorest author of that time in London, sleeping on a bulk, dining in a cellar, with a cravat of paper, and a skewer for a shirt-pin, was a happier man than any of the literary inmates of Frederic's court.

But of all who entered the enchanted garden in the inebriation of delight and quitted it in agonies of rage and shame, the most remarkable was Voltaire. Many circumstances had made him desirous of finding a home at a distance from his country. His fame had raised him up enemies. His sensibility gave them a formidable advantage over him. They were, indeed, contemptible assailants. Of all that they wrote against him, nothing has survived except what he has himself preserved. But the constitution of his mind resembled the constitution of those bodies in which the slightest scratch of a bramble or the bite of a gnat never fails to fester. Though his reputation was rather raised than lowered by the abuse of such writers as Fréron and Desfontaines, though the vengeance that he took on Fréron and Desfontaines was such that scourging, branding, pillorying, would have been a trifle to it, there is reason to believe that they gave him far more pain than he ever gave them. Though he enjoyed during his own lifetime the reputation of a classic ; though he was extolled by his contemporaries above all poets, philosophers, and historians ; though his works were read with as much delight and admiration at Moscow and Westminster, at Florence and Stockholm, as at Paris itself, he was yet tormented by that

restless jealousy which should seem to belong only to minds burning with the desire of fame and yet conscious of impotence. To men of letters who could by no possibility be his rivals he was, if they behaved well to him, not merely just, not merely courteous, but often a hearty friend and a munificent benefactor. But to every writer who rose to a celebrity approaching his own he became either a disguised or an avowed enemy. He slyly deprecated Montesquieu and Buffon. He publicly, and with violent rage, made war on Rousseau. Nor had he the art of hiding his feelings under the semblance of good-humor or of contempt. With all his great talents, and all his long experience of the world, he had no more self-command than a petted child or a hysterical woman. Whenever he was mortified, he exhausted the whole rhetoric of anger and sorrow to express his mortification. His torrents of bitter words, his stamping and cursing, his grimaces and his tears of rage, were a rich feast to those abject natures whose delight is in the agonies of powerful spirits and in the abasement of immortal names. These creatures had now found out a way of galling him to the very quick. In one walk, at least, it had been admitted by envy itself that he was without a living competitor. Since Racine had been laid among the great men whose dust made the holy precinct of Port-Royal holier, no tragic poet had appeared who could contest the palm with the author of Zaire, of Alzire, and of Mérope. At length a rival was announced. Old Crébillon, who, many years before, had obtained some theatrical success, and who had long been forgotten, came forth from his garret in one of the meanest lanes near the Rue St.-Antoine, and was welcomed by the acclama-

tions of envious men of letters and of a capricious populace. A thing called Catiline, which he had written in his retirement, was acted with boundless applause. Of this execrable piece it is sufficient to say that the plot turns on a love affair, carried on in all the forms of Scudéry, between Catiline, whose confidant is the Prætor Lentulus, and Tullia, the daughter of Cicero. The theatre resounded with acclamations. The King pensioned the successful poet ; and the coffee-houses pronounced that Voltaire was a clever man, but that the real tragic inspiration, the celestial fire which had glowed in Corneille and Racine, was to be found in Crébillon alone.

The blow went to Voltaire's heart. Had his wisdom and fortitude been in proportion to the fertility of his intellect and to the brilliancy of his wit, he would have seen that it was out of the power of all the puffers and detractors in Europe to put Catiline above Zaire ; but he had none of the magnanimous patience with which Milton and Bentley left their claims to the unerring judgment of time. He eagerly engaged in an undignified competition with Crébillon, and produced a series of plays on the same subjects which his rival had treated. These pieces were coolly received. Angry with the court, angry with the capital, Voltaire began to find pleasure in the prospect of exile. His attachment to Madame du Châtelet long prevented him from executing his purpose. Her death set him at liberty, and he determined to take refuge in Berlin.

To Berlin he was invited by a series of letters couched in terms of the most enthusiastic friendship and admiration. For once the rigid parsimony of Frederic seemed to have relaxed. Orders, honorable offices, a

liberal pension, a well-served table, stately apartments under a royal roof, were offered in return for the pleasure and honor which were expected from the society of the first wit of the age. A thousand louis were remitted for the charges of the journey. No ambassador setting out from Berlin for a court of the first rank had ever been more amply supplied. But Voltaire was not satisfied. At a later period, when he possessed an ample fortune, he was one of the most liberal of men; but till his means had become equal to his wishes, his greediness for lucre was unrestrained either by justice or by shame. He had the effrontery to ask for a thousand louis more, in order to enable him to bring his niece, Madame Denis, the ugliest of coquettes, in his company. The indelicate rapacity of the poet produced its natural effect on the severe and frugal king. The answer was a dry refusal. "I did not," said his Majesty, "solicit the honor of the lady's society." On this Voltaire went off into a paroxysm of childish rage. "Was there ever such avarice? He has hundreds of tubs full of dollars in his vaults, and haggles with me about a poor thousand louis." It seemed that the negotiation would be broken off; but Frederic, with great dexterity, affected indifference, and seemed inclined to transfer his idolatry to Baculard d'Arnaud. His Majesty even wrote some bad verses, of which the sense was that Voltaire was a setting sun and that Arnaud was rising. Good-natured friends soon carried the lines to Voltaire. He was in his bed. He jumped out in his shirt, danced about the room with rage, and sent for his passport and his post-horses. It was not difficult to foresee the end of a connection which had such a beginning.

It was in the year 1750 that Voltaire left the great capital, which he was not to see again till, after the lapse of near thirty years, he returned, bowed down by extreme old age, to die in the midst of a splendid and ghastly triumph. His reception in Prussia was such as might well have elated a less vain and excitable mind. He wrote to his friends at Paris that the kindness and the attention with which he had been welcomed surpassed description, that the King was the most amiable of men, that Potsdam was the paradise of philosophers. He was created chamberlain, and received, together with his gold key, the cross of an order, and a patent insuring to him a pension of eight hundred pounds sterling a year for life. A hundred and sixty pounds a year were promised to his niece if she survived him. The royal cooks and coachmen were put at his disposal. He was lodged in the same apartments in which Saxe had lived when, at the height of power and glory, he visited Prussia. Frederic, indeed, stooped for a time even to use the language of adulation. He pressed to his lips the meagre hand of the little grinning skeleton whom he regarded as the dispenser of immortal renown. He would add, he said, to the titles which he owed to his ancestors and his sword another title derived from his last and proudest acquisition. His style should run thus : Frederic, King of Prussia, Margrave of Brandenburg, Sovereign Duke of Silesia, Possessor of Voltaire. But even amidst the delights of the honeymoon Voltaire's sensitive vanity began to take alarm. A few days after his arrival, he could not help telling his niece that the amiable King had a trick of giving a sly scratch with one hand while patting and stroking with the other. Soon came hints

not the less alarming because mysterious. "The supper-parties are delicious. The King is the life of the company. But—I have operas and comedies, reviews and concerts, my studies and books. But—but—Berlin is fine, the princesses charming, the maids of honor handsome. But—"

This eccentric friendship was fast cooling. Never had there met two persons so exquisitely fitted to plague each other. Each of them had exactly the fault of which the other was most impatient; and they were, in different ways, the most impatient of mankind. Frederic was frugal, almost niggardly. When he had secured his plaything, he began to think that he had bought it too dear. Voltaire, on the other hand, was greedy, even to the extent of impudence and knavery; and conceived that the favorite of a monarch who had barrels full of gold and silver laid up in cellars ought to make a fortune which a receiver-general might envy. They soon discovered each other's feelings. Both were angry; and a war began in which Frederic stooped to the part of Harpagon, and Voltaire to that of Scapin. It is humiliating to relate that the great warrior and statesman gave orders that his guest's allowance of sugar and chocolate should be curtailed. It is, if possible, a still more humiliating fact that Voltaire indemnified himself by pocketing the wax-candles in the royal antechamber. Disputes about money, however, were not the most serious disputes of these extraordinary associates. The sarcasms of the King soon galled the sensitive temper of the poet. D'Arnaud and D'Argens, Guichard and La Mettrie, might, for the sake of a morsel of bread, be willing to bear the insolence of a master; but Voltaire was of

another order. He knew that he was a potentate as well as Frederic, that his European reputation and his incomparable power of covering whatever he hated with ridicule made him an object of dread even to the leaders of armies and the rulers of nations. In truth, of all the intellectual weapons which have ever been wielded by man, the most terrible was the mockery of Voltaire. Bigots and tyrants who had never been moved by the wailing and cursing of millions turned pale at his name. Principles unassailable by reason—principles which had withstood the fiercest attacks of power—the most valuable truths, the most generous sentiments, the noblest and most graceful images, the purest reputations, the most august institutions, began to look mean and loathsome as soon as that withering smile was turned upon them. To every opponent, however strong in his cause and his talents, in his station and his character, who ventured to encounter the great scoffer might be addressed the caution which was given of old to the Archangel :

> "I forewarn thee, shun
> His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
> To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
> Though tempered heavenly ; for that fatal dint,
> Save Him who reigns above, none can resist."

We cannot pause to recount how often that rare talent was exercised against rivals worthy of esteem ; how often it was used to crush and torture enemies worthy only of silent disdain ; how often it was perverted to the more noxious purpose of destroying the last solace of earthly misery, and the last restraint on earthly power. Neither can we pause to tell how often

it was used to vindicate justice, humanity, and toleration, the principles of sound philosophy, the principles of free government. This is not the place for a full character of Voltaire.

Causes of quarrel multiplied fast. Voltaire, who, partly from love of money, and partly from love of excitement, was always fond of stockjobbing, became implicated in transactions of at least a dubious character. The King was delighted at having such an opportunity to humble his guest; and bitter reproaches and complaints were exchanged. Voltaire, too, was soon at war with the other men of letters who surrounded the King; and this irritated Frederic, who, however, had himself chiefly to blame; for, from that love of tormenting which was in him a ruling passion, he perpetually lavished extravagant praises on small men and bad books, merely in order that he might enjoy the mortification and rage which, on such occasions, Voltaire took no pains to conceal. His Majesty, however, soon had reason to regret the pains which he had taken to kindle jealousy among the members of his household. The whole palace was in a ferment with literary intrigues and cabals. It was to no purpose that the imperial voice, which kept a hundred and sixty thousand soldiers in order, was raised to quiet the contention of the exasperated wits. It was far easier to stir up such a storm than to lull it. Nor was Frederic, in his capacity of wit, by any means without his own share of vexations. He had sent a large quantity of verses to Voltaire, and requested that they might be returned with remarks and corrections. "See," exclaimed Voltaire, "what a quantity of his dirty linen the King has sent me to wash!" Tale-bearers were not wanting to

carry the sarcasm to the royal ear ; and Frederic was as much incensed as a Grub Street writer who had found his name in the Dunciad.

This could not last. A circumstance which, when the mutual regard of the friends was in its first glow, would merely have been matter for laughter produced a violent explosion. Maupertuis enjoyed as much of Frederic's good-will as any man of letters. He was President of the Academy of Berlin ; and he stood second to Voltaire, though at an immense distance, in the literary society which had been assembled at the Prussian court. Frederic had, by playing for his own amusement on the feelings of the two jealous and vain-glorious Frenchmen, succeeded in producing a bitter enmity between them. Voltaire resolved to set his mark—a mark never to be effaced—on the forehead of Maupertuis, and wrote the exquisitely ludicrous Diatribe of Doctor Akakia. He showed this little piece to Frederic, who had too much taste and too much malice not to relish such delicious pleasantry. In truth, even at this time of day it is not easy for any person who has the least perception of the ridiculous to read the jokes on the Latin city, the Patagonians, and the hole to the centre of the earth without laughing till he cries. But though Frederic was diverted by this charming pasquinade, he was unwilling that it should get abroad. His self-love was interested. He had selected Maupertuis to fill the chair of his Academy. If all Europe were taught to laugh at Maupertuis, would not the reputation of the Academy, would not even the dignity of its royal patron, be in some degree compromised ? The King, therefore, begged Voltaire to suppress this performance. Voltaire promised to do so, and broke

his word. The Diatribe was published, and received with shouts of merriment and applause by all who could read the French language. The King stormed. Voltaire, with his usual disregard of truth, asserted his innocence, and made up some lie about a printer or an amanuensis. The King was not to be so imposed upon. He ordered the pamphlet to be burned by the common hangman, and insisted upon having an apology from Voltaire, couched in the most abject terms. Voltaire sent back to the King his cross, his key, and the patent of his pension. After this burst of rage, the strange pair began to be ashamed of their violence, and went through the forms of reconciliation. But the breach was irreparable ; and Voltaire took his leave of Frederic forever. They parted with cold civility ; but their hearts were big with resentment. Voltaire had in his keeping a volume of the King's poetry, and forgot to return it. This was, we believe, merely one of the oversights which men setting out upon a journey often commit. That Voltaire could have meditated plagiarism is quite incredible. He would not, we are confident, for the half of Frederic's kingdom, have consented to father Frederic's verses. The King, however, who rated his own writings much above their value, and who was inclined to see all Voltaire's actions in the worst light, was enraged to think that his favorite compositions were in the hands of an enemy as thievish as a daw and as mischievous as a monkey. In the anger excited by this thought, he lost sight of reason and decency, and determined on committing an outrage at once odious and ridiculous.

Voltaire had reached Frankfort. His niece, Madame Denis, came thither to meet him. He conceived him-

self secure from the power of his late master, when he was arrested by order of the Prussian resident. The precious volume was delivered up. But the Prussian agents had, no doubt, been instructed not to let Voltaire escape without some gross indignity. He was confined twelve days in a wretched hovel. Sentinels with fixed bayonets kept guard over him. His niece was dragged through the mire by the soldiers. Sixteen hundred dollars were extorted from him by his insolent jailers. It is absurd to say that this outrage is not to be attributed to the King. Was anybody punished for it? Was anybody called in question for it? Was it not consistent with Frederic's character? Was it not of a piece with his conduct on other similar occasions? Is it not notorious that he repeatedly gave private directions to his officers to pillage and demolish the houses of persons against whom he had a grudge, charging them at the same time to take their measures in such a way that his name might not be compromised? He acted thus towards Count Brühl in the Seven Years' War. Why should we believe that he would have been more scrupulous with regard to Voltaire?

When at length the illustrious prisoner regained his liberty, the prospect before him was but dreary. He was an exile both from the country of his birth and from the country of his adoption. The French government had taken offence at his journey to Prussia, and would not permit him to return to Paris; and in the vicinity of Prussia it was not safe for him to remain.

He took refuge on the beautiful shores of Lake Leman. There, loosed from every tie which had hitherto restrained him, and having little to hope or to

fear from courts and churches, he began his long war against all that, whether for good or evil, had authority over man; for what Burke said of the Constituent Assembly was eminently true of this its great forerunner: Voltaire could not build; he could only pull down; he was the very Vitruvius of ruin. He has bequeathed to us not a single doctrine to be called by his name, not a single addition to the stock of our positive knowledge. But no human teacher ever left behind him so vast and terrible a wreck of truths and falsehoods, of things noble and things base, of things useful and things pernicious. From the time when his sojourn beneath the Alps commenced, the dramatist, the wit, the historian, was merged in a more important character. He was now the patriarch, the founder of a sect, the chief of a conspiracy, the prince of a wide intellectual commonwealth. He often enjoyed a pleasure dear to the better part of his nature—the pleasure of vindicating innocence which had no other helper, of repairing cruel wrongs, of punishing tyranny in high places. He had also the satisfaction, not less acceptable to his ravenous vanity, of hearing terrified Capuchins call him the Antichrist. But whether employed in works of benevolence or in works of mischief, he never forgot Potsdam and Frankfort; and he listened anxiously to every murmur which indicated that a tempest was gathering in Europe, and that his vengeance was at hand.

He soon had his wish. Maria Theresa had never for a moment forgotten the great wrong which she had received at the hand of Frederic. Young and delicate, just left an orphan, just about to be a mother, she had been compelled to fly from the ancient capital of her

race ; she had seen her fair inheritance dismembered by robbers, and of those robbers he had been the foremost. Without a pretext, without a provocation, in defiance of the most sacred engagements, he had attacked the helpless ally whom he was bound to defend. The Empress Queen had the faults as well as the virtues which are connected with quick sensibility and a high spirit. There was no peril which she was not ready to brave, no calamity which she was not ready to bring on her subjects, or on the whole human race, if only she might once taste the sweetness of a complete revenge. Revenge, too, presented itself to her narrow and superstitious mind in the guise of duty. Silesia had been wrested not only from the House of Austria but from the Church of Rome. The conqueror had indeed permitted his new subjects to worship God after their own fashion ; but this was not enough. To bigotry it seemed an intolerable hardship that the Catholic Church, having long enjoyed ascendency, should be compelled to content itself with equality. Nor was this the only circumstance which led Maria Theresa to regard her enemy as the enemy of God. The profaneness of Frederic's writings and conversation, and the frightful rumors which were circulated respecting the immorality of his private life, naturally shocked a woman who believed with the firmest faith all that her confessor told her, and who, though surrounded by temptations, though young and beautiful, though ardent in all her passions, though possessed of absolute power, had preserved her fame unsullied even by the breath of slander.

To recover Silesia, to humble the dynasty of Hohenzollern to the dust, was the great object of her life.

She toiled during many years for this end, with zeal as indefatigable as that which the poet ascribes to the stately goddess who tired out her immortal horses in the work of raising the nations against Troy, and who offered to give up to destruction her darling Sparta and Mycenæ, if only she might once see the smoke going up from the palace of Priam. With even such a spirit did the proud Austrian Juno strive to array against her foe a coalition such as Europe had never seen. Nothing would content her but that the whole civilized world, from the White Sea to the Adriatic, from the Bay of Biscay to the pastures of the wild horses of the Tanais, should be combined in arms against one petty state.

She early succeeded by various arts in obtaining the adhesion of Russia. An ample share of spoil was promised to the King of Poland ; and that prince, governed by his favorite, Count Brühl, readily promised the assistance of the Saxon forces. The great difficulty was with France. That the Houses of Bourbon and of Hapsburg should ever cordially co-operate in any great scheme of European policy had long been thought, to use the strong expression of Frederic, just as impossible as that fire and water should amalgamate. The whole history of the Continent during two centuries and a half had been the history of the mutual jealousies and enmities of France and Austria. Since the administration of Richelieu, above all, it had been considered as the plain policy of the Most Christian King to thwart on all occasions the Court of Vienna, and to protect every member of the Germanic body who stood up against the dictation of the Cæsars. Common sentiments of religion had been unable to

mitigate this strong antipathy. The rulers of France, even while clothed in the Roman purple, even while persecuting the heretics of Rochelle and Auvergne, had still looked with favor on the Lutheran and Calvinistic princes who were struggling against the chief of the empire. If the French ministers paid any respect to the traditional rules handed down to them through many generations, they would have acted towards Frederic as the greatest of their predecessors acted towards Gustavus Adolphus. That there was deadly enmity between Prussia and Austria was of itself a sufficient reason for close friendship between Prussia and France. With France Frederic could never have any sérious controversy. His territories were so situated that his ambition, greedy and unscrupulous as it was, could never impel him to attack her of his own accord. He was more than half a Frenchman; he wrote, spoke, read nothing but French; he delighted in French society; the admiration of the French he proposed to himself as the best reward of all his exploits. It seemed incredible that any French government, however notorious for levity or stupidity, could spurn away such an ally.

The Court of Vienna, however, did not despair. The Austrian diplomatists propounded a new scheme of politics which, it must be owned, was not altogether without plausibility. The great powers, according to this theory, had long been under a delusion. They had looked on each other as natural enemies, while, in truth, they were natural allies. A succession of cruel wars had devastated Europe, had thinned the population, had exhausted the public resources, had loaded governments with an immense burden of debt; and

when, after two hundred years of murderous hostility or of hollow truce, the illustrious houses whose enmity had distracted the world sat down to count their gains, to what did the real advantage on either side amount? Simply to this, that they had kept each other from thriving. It was not the King of France, it was not the Emperor, who had reaped the fruits of the Thirty Years' War, or of the War of the Pragmatic Sanction. Those fruits had been pilfered by states of the second and third rank, which, secured against jealousy by their insignificance, had dexterously aggrandized themselves while pretending to serve the animosity of the great chiefs of Christendom. While the lion and tiger were tearing each other, the jackal had run off into the jungle with the prey. The real gainer by the Thirty Years' War had been neither France nor Austria, but Sweden. The real gainer by the War of the Pragmatic Sanction had been neither France nor Austria, but the upstart of Brandenburg. France had made great efforts, had added largely to her military glory, and largely to her public burdens. And for what end? Merely that Frederic might rule Silesia. For this, and this alone, one French army, wasted by sword and famine, had perished in Bohemia; and another had purchased, with floods of the noblest blood, the barren glory of Fontenoy. And this prince for whom France had suffered so much, was he a grateful, was he even an honest ally? Had he not been as false to the Court of Versailles as to the Court of Vienna? Had he not played, on a large scale, the same part which, in private life, is played by the vile agent of chicane who sets his neighbors quarrelling, involves them in costly and interminable litigation, and betrays them to each other

all round, certain that, whoever may be ruined, he shall be enriched? Surely the true wisdom of the great powers was to attack, not each other, but this common barrator, who, by inflaming the passions of both, by pretending to serve both, and by deserting both, had raised himself above the station to which he was born. The great object of Austria was to regain Silesia; the great object of France was to obtain an accession of territory on the side of Flanders. If they took opposite sides, the result would probably be that, after a war of many years, after the slaughter of many thousands of brave men, after the waste of many millions of crowns, they would lay down their arms without having achieved either object; but if they came to an understanding, there would be no risk and no difficulty. Austria would willingly make in Belgium such cessions as France could not expect to obtain by ten pitched battles. Silesia would easily be annexed to the monarchy of which it had long been a part. The union of two such powerful governments would at once overawe the King of Prussia. If he resisted, one short campaign would settle his fate. France and Austria, long accustomed to rise from the game of war both losers, would, for the first time, both be gainers. There could be no room for jealousy between them. The power of both would be increased at once; the equilibrium between them would be preserved; and the only sufferer would be a mischievous and unprincipled buccaneer who deserved no tenderness from either.

These doctrines, attractive from their novelty and ingenuity, soon became fashionable at the supper-parties and in the coffee-houses of Paris, and were

espoused by every gay marquis and every facetious abbé who was admitted to see Madame de Pompadour's hair curled and powdered. It was not, however, to any political theory that the strange coalition between France and Austria owed its origin. The real motive which induced the great Continental powers to forget their old animosities and their old State maxims was personal aversion to the King of Prussia. This feeling was strongest in Maria Theresa; but it was by no means confined to her. Frederic, in some respects a good master, was emphatically a bad neighbor. That he was hard in all dealings, and quick to take all advantages, was not his most odious fault. His bitter and scoffing speech had inflicted keener wounds than his ambition. In his character of wit he was under less restraint than even in his character of ruler. Satirical verses against all the princes and ministers of Europe were ascribed to his pen. In his letters and conversation he alluded to the greatest potentates of the age in terms which would have better suited Collé, in a war of repartee with young Crébillon at Pelletier's table, than a great sovereign speaking of great sovereigns. About women he was in the habit of expressing himself in a manner which it was impossible for the meekest of women to forgive; and, unfortunately for him, almost the whole Continent was then governed by women who were by no means conspicuous for meekness. Maria Theresa herself had not escaped his scurrilous jests. The Empress Elizabeth of Russia knew that her gallantries afforded him a favorite theme for ribaldry and invective. Madame de Pompadour, who was really the head of the French government, had been even more keenly galled. She had attempted, by

the most delicate flattery, to propitiate the King of Prussia ; but her messages had drawn from him only dry and sarcastic replies. The Empress Queen took a very different course. Though the haughtiest of princesses, though the most austere of matrons, she forgot in her thirst for revenge both the dignity of her race and the purity of her character, and condescended to flatter the low-born and low-minded concubine, who, having acquired influence by prostituting herself, retained it by prostituting others. Maria Theresa actually wrote with her own hand a note, full of expressions of esteem and friendship, to her dear cousin, the daughter of the butcher Poisson, the wife of the publican D'Etioles, the kidnapper of young girls for the harem of an old rake—a strange cousin for the descendant of so many Emperors of the West ! The mistress was completely gained over, and easily carried her point with Louis, who had, indeed, wrongs of his own to resent. His feelings were not quick ; but contempt, says the Eastern proverb, pierces even through the shell of the tortoise ; and neither prudence nor decorum had ever restrained Frederic from expressing his measureless contempt for the sloth, the imbecility, and the baseness of Louis. France was thus induced to join the coalition ; and the example of France determined the conduct of Sweden, then completely subject to French influence.

The enemies of Frederic were surely strong enough to attack him openly; but they were desirous to add to all their other advantages the advantage of a surprise. He was not, however, a man to be taken off his guard. He had tools in every court ; and he now received from Vienna, from Dresden, and from Paris accounts so cir-

cumstantial and so consistent that he could not doubt of his danger. He learned that he was to be assailed at once by France, Austria, Russia, Saxony, Sweden, and the Germanic body ; that the greater part of his dominions was to be portioned out among his enemies ; that France, which from her geographical position could not directly share in his spoils, was to receive an equivalent in the Netherlands ; that Austria was to have Silesia, and the Czarina East Prussia ; that Augustus of Saxony expected Magdeburg ; and that Sweden would be rewarded with Pomerania. If these designs succeeded, the House of Brandenburg would at once sink in the European system to a place lower than that of the Duke of Würtemberg or the Margrave of Baden.

And what hope was there that these designs would fail ? No such union of the Continental powers had been seen for ages. A less formidable confederacy had in a week conquered all the provinces of Venice, when Venice was at the height of power, wealth, and glory. A less formidable confederacy had compelled Louis the Fourteenth to bow down his haughty head to the very earth. A less formidable confederacy has, within our own memory, subjugated a still mightier empire and abased a still prouder name. Such odds had never been heard of in war. The people whom Frederic ruled were not five millions. The population of the countries which were leagued against him amounted to a hundred millions. The disproportion in wealth was at least equally great. Small communities, actuated by strong sentiments of patriotism or loyalty, have sometimes made head against great monarchies weakened by factions and discontents. But small as was Frederic's kingdom, it probably contained a greater

number of disaffected subjects than were to be found in all the states of his enemies. Silesia formed a fourth part of his dominions; and from the Silesians, born under Austrian princes, the utmost that he could expect was apathy. From the Silesian Catholics he could hardly expect anything but resistance.

Some estates have been enabled by their geographical position to defend themselves with advantage against immense force. The sea has repeatedly protected England against the fury of the whole Continent. The Venetian government, driven from its possessions on the land, could still bid defiance to the confederates of Cambray from the Arsenal amidst the lagoons. More than one great and well-appointed army which regarded the shepherds of Switzerland as an easy prey has perished in the passes of the Alps. Frederic had no such advantage. The form of his states, their situation, the nature of the ground, all were against him. His long, scattered, straggling territory seemed to have been shaped with an express view to the convenience of invaders, and was protected by no sea, by no chain of hills. Scarcely any corner of it was a week's march from the territory of the enemy. The capital itself, in the event of war, would be constantly exposed to insult. In truth, there was hardly a politician or a soldier in Europe who doubted that the conflict would be terminated in a very few days by the prostration of the House of Brandenburg.

Nor was Frederic's own opinion very different. He anticipated nothing short of his own ruin, and of the ruin of his family. Yet there was still a chance, a slender chance, of escape. His states had at least the advantage of a central position; his enemies were

widely separated from each other, and could not conveniently unite their overwhelming forces on one point. They inhabited different climates, and it was probable that the season of the year which would be best suited to the military operations of one portion of the league would be unfavorable to those of another portion. The Prussian monarchy, too, was free from some infirmities which were found in empires far more extensive and magnificent. Its effective strength for a desperate struggle was not to be measured merely by the number of square miles or the number of people. In that spare but well-knit and well-exercised body there was nothing but sinew and muscle and bone. No public creditors looked for dividends. No distant colonies required defence. No court filled with flatterers and mistresses devoured the pay of fifty battalions. The Prussian army, though far inferior in number to the troops which were about to be opposed to it, was yet strong out of all proportion to the extent of the Prussian dominions. It was also admirably trained and admirably officered, accustomed to obey and accustomed to conquer. The revenue was not only unencumbered by debt, but exceeded the ordinary outlay in time of peace. Alone of all the European princes, Frederic had a treasure laid up for a day of difficulty. Above all, he was one, and his enemies were many. In their camps would certainly be found the jealousy, the dissension, the slackness, inseparable from coalitions. On his side were the energy, the unity, the secrecy, of a strong dictatorship. To a certain extent the deficiency of military means might be supplied by the resources of military art. Small as the King's army was, when compared with the six hundred thousand men whom

the confederates could bring into the field, celerity of movement might in some degree compensate for deficiency of bulk. It was just possible that genius, judgment, resolution, and good-luck united might protract the struggle during a campaign or two ; and to gain even a month was of importance. It could not be long before the vices which are found in all extensive confederacies would begin to show themselves. Every member of the league would think his own share of the war too large, and his own share of the spoils too small. Complaints and recriminations would abound. The Turk might stir on the Danube ; the statesmen of France might discover the error which they had committed in abandoning the fundamental principles of their national policy. Above all, death might rid Prussia of its most formidable enemies. The war was the effect of the personal aversion with which three or four sovereigns regarded Frederic ; and the decease of any one of those sovereigns might produce a complete revolution in the state of Europe.

In the midst of an horizon generally dark and stormy Frederic could discern one bright spot. The peace which had been concluded between England and France in 1748 had been in Europe no more than an armistice, and had not even been an armistice in the other quarters of the globe. In India the sovereignty of the Carnatic was disputed between two great Mussulman houses ; Fort St. George had taken one side, Pondicherry the other ; and in a series of battles and sieges the troops of Lawrence and Clive had been opposed to those of Dupleix. A struggle less important in its consequences, but not less likely to produce irritation, was carried on between those French and Eng-

lish adventurers who kidnapped negroes and collected gold-dust on the coast of Guinea. But it was in North America that the emulation and mutual aversion of the two nations were most conspicuous. The French attempted to hem in the English colonists by a chain of military posts, extending from the great lakes to the mouth of the Mississippi. The English took arms. The wild aboriginal tribes appeared on each side mingled with the pale-faces. Battles were fought; forts were stormed; and hideous stories about stakes, scalpings, and death-songs reached Europe, and inflamed that national animosity which the rivalry of ages had produced. The disputes between France and England came to a crisis at the very time when the tempest which had been gathering was about to burst on Prussia. The tastes and interests of Frederic would have led him, if he had been allowed an option, to side with the House of Bourbon. But the folly of the Court of Versailles left him no choice. France became the tool of Austria; and Frederic was forced to become the ally of England. He could not, indeed, expect that a power which covered the sea with its fleets, and which had to make war at once on the Ohio and the Ganges, would be able to spare a large number of troops for operations in Germany. But England, though poor compared with the England of our time, was far richer than any country on the Continent. The amount of her revenue and the resources which she found in her credit, though they may be thought small by a generation which has seen her raise a hundred and thirty millions in a single year, appeared miraculous to the politicians of that age. A very moderate portion of her wealth, expended by an able and economical

prince, in a country where prices were low, would be sufficient to equip and maintain a formidable army.

Such was the situation in which Frederic found himself. He saw the whole extent of his peril. He saw that there was still a faint possibility of escape ; and, with prudent temerity, he determined to strike the first blow. It was in the month of August, 1756, that the great war of the Seven Years commenced. The King demanded of the Empress Queen a distinct explanation of her intentions, and plainly told her that he should consider a refusal as a declaration of war. "I want," he said, "no answer in the style of an oracle." He received an answer at once haughty and evasive. In an instant the rich electorate of Saxony was overflowed by sixty thousand Prussian troops. Augustus with his army occupied a strong position at Pirna. The Queen of Poland was at Dresden. In a few days Pirna was blockaded and Dresden was taken. The first object of Frederic was to obtain possession of the Saxon state-papers ; for those papers, he well knew, contained ample proofs that, though apparently an aggressor, he was really acting in self-defence. The Queen of Poland, as well acquainted as Frederic with the importance of those documents, had packed them up, had concealed them in her bedchamber, and was about to send them off to Warsaw when a Prussian officer made his appearance. In the hope that no soldier would venture to outrage a lady, a queen, the daughter of an emperor, the mother-in-law of a dauphin, she placed herself before the trunk, and at length sat down on it. But all resistance was vain. The papers were carried to Frederic, who found in them, as he expected, abundant evidence of the designs of the coalition. The most im-

portant documents were instantly published, and the effect of the publication was great. It was clear that, of whatever sins the King of Prussia might formerly have been guilty, he was now the injured party, and had merely anticipated a blow intended to destroy him.

The Saxon camp at Pirna was in the meantime closely invested; but the besieged were not without hopes of succor. A great Austrian army under Marshal Brown was about to pour through the passes which separate Bohemia from Saxony. Frederic left at Pirna a force sufficient to deal with the Saxons, hastened into Bohemia, encountered Brown at Lowositz, and defeated him. This battle decided the fate of Saxony. Augustus and his favorite Brühl fled to Poland. The whole army of the electorate capitulated. From that time till the end of the war, Frederic treated Saxony as a part of his dominions, or, rather, he acted towards the Saxons in a manner which may serve to illustrate the whole meaning of that tremendous sentence, "Subjectos tanquam suos, viles tanquam alienos." Saxony was as much in his power as Brandenburg; and he had no such interest in the welfare of Saxony as he had in the welfare of Brandenburg. He accordingly levied troops and exacted contributions throughout the enslaved province with far more rigor than in any part of his own dominions. Seventeen thousand men who had been in the camp at Pirna were half compelled, half persuaded, to enlist under their conqueror. Thus, within a few weeks from the commencement of hostilities, one of the confederates had been disarmed, and his weapons were now pointed against the rest.

The winter put a stop to military operations. All had hitherto gone well. But the real tug of war was

still to come. It was easy to foresee that the year 1757 would be a memorable era in the history of Europe.

The King's scheme for the campaign was simple, bold, and judicious. The Duke of Cumberland with an English and Hanoverian army was in Western Germany, and might be able to prevent the French troops from attacking Prussia. The Russians, confined by their snows, would probably not stir till the spring was far advanced. Saxony was prostrated. Sweden could do nothing very important. During a few months Frederic would have to deal with Austria alone. Even thus the odds were against him. But ability and courage have often triumphed against odds still more formidable.

Early in 1757 the Prussian army in Saxony began to move. Through four defiles in the mountains they came pouring into Bohemia. Prague was the King's first mark; but the ulterior object was probably Vienna. At Prague lay Marshal Brown with one great army. Daun, the most cautious and fortunate of the Austrian captains, was advancing with another. Frederic determined to overwhelm Brown before Daun should arrive. On the sixth of May was fought, under those walls which, a hundred and thirty years before, had witnessed the victory of the Catholic league and the flight of the unhappy Palatine, a battle more bloody than any which Europe saw during the long interval between Malplaquet and Eylau. The King and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick were distinguished on that day by their valor and exertions. But the chief glory was with Schwerin. When the Prussian infantry wavered, the stout old marshal snatched the colors from an ensign, and, waving them in the air, led

back his regiment to the charge. Thus, at seventy-two years of age, he fell in the thickest battle, still grasping the standard which bears the black eagle on the field argent. The victory remained with the King ; but it had been dearly purchased. Whole columns of his bravest warriors had fallen. He admitted that he had lost eighteen thousand men. Of the enemy, twenty-four thousand had been killed, wounded, or taken.

Part of the defeated army was shut up in Prague. Part fled to join the troops which, under the command of Daun, were now close at hand. Frederic determined to play over the same game which had succeeded at Lowositz. He left a large force to besiege Prague, and at the head of thirty thousand men he marched against Daun. The cautious Marshal, though he had a great superiority in numbers, would risk nothing. He occupied at Kolin a position almost impregnable, and awaited the attack of the King.

It was the eighteenth of June, a day which, if the Greek superstition still retained its influence, would be held sacred to Nemesis—a day on which the two greatest princes of modern times were taught by a terrible experience that neither skill nor valor can fix the inconstancy of fortune. The battle began before noon, and part of the Prussian army maintained the contest till after the midsummer sun had gone down. But at length the King found that his troops, having been repeatedly driven back with frightful carnage, could no longer be led to the charge. He was with difficulty persuaded to quit the field. The officers of his personal staff were under the necessity of expostulating with him, and one of them took the liberty to say, " Does your Majesty mean to storm the batteries alone ? "

Thirteen thousand of his bravest followers had perished. Nothing remained for him but to retreat in good order, to raise the siege of Prague, and to hurry his army by different routes out of Bohemia.

This stroke seemed to be final. Frederic's situation had at best been such that only an uninterrupted run of good-luck could save him, as it seemed, from ruin. And now, almost in the outset of the contest, he had met with a check which even in a war between equal powers would have been felt as serious. He had owed much to the opinion which all Europe entertained of his army. Since his accession, his soldiers had in many successive battles been victorious over the Austrians. But the glory had departed from his arms. All whom his malevolent sarcasms had wounded made haste to avenge themselves by scoffing at the scoffer. His soldiers had ceased to confide in his star. In every part of his camp his dispositions were severely criticised. Even in his own family he had detractors. His next brother, William, heir presumptive, or rather, in truth, heir apparent, to the throne, and great-grandfather of the present king, could not refrain from lamenting his own fate and that of the House of Hohenzollern, once so great and so prosperous, but now, by the rash ambition of its chief, made a byword to all nations. These complaints, and some blunders which William committed during the retreat from Bohemia, called forth the bitter displeasure of the inexorable King. The prince's heart was broken by the cutting reproaches of his brother ; he quitted the army, retired to a country-seat, and in a short time died of shame and vexation.

It seemed that the King's distress could hardly be

increased. Yet at this moment another blow not less terrible than that of Kolin fell upon him. The French, under Marshal d'Estrées, had invaded Germany. The Duke of Cumberland had given them battle at Hastenbeck and had been defeated. In order to save the electorate of Hanover from entire subjugation, he had made at Closter Seven an arrangement with the French generals which left them at liberty to turn their arms against the Prussian dominions.

That nothing might be wanting to Frederic's distress, he lost his mother just at this time ; and he appears to have felt the loss more than was to be expected from the hardness and severity of his character. In truth, his misfortunes had now cut to the quick. The mocker, the tyrant, the most rigorous, the most imperious, the most cynical of men, was very unhappy. His face was so haggard and his form so thin that when, on his return from Bohemia, he passed through Leipsic the people hardly knew him again. His sleep was broken ; the tears, in spite of himself, often started into his eyes ; and the grave began to present itself to his agitated mind as the best refuge from misery and dishonor. His resolution was fixed never to be taken alive, and never to make peace on condition of descending from his place among the powers of Europe. He saw nothing left for him except to die ; and he deliberately chose his mode of death. He always carried about with him a sure and speedy poison in a small glass case ; and to the few in whom he placed confidence he made no mystery of his resolution.

But we should very imperfectly describe the state of Frederic's mind if we left out of view the laughable peculiarities which contrasted so singularly with the

gravity, energy, and harshness of his character. It is difficult to say whether the tragic or the comic predominated in the strange scene which was then acting. In the midst of all the great King's calamities, his passion for writing indifferent poetry grew stronger and stronger. Enemies all around him, despair in his heart, pills of corrosive sublimate hidden in his clothes, he poured forth hundreds upon hundreds of lines hateful to gods and men, the insipid dregs of Voltaire's Hippocrene, the faint echo of the lyre of Chaulieu. It is amusing to compare what he did during the last months of 1757 with what he wrote during the same time. It may be doubted whether any equal portion of the life of Hannibal, of Cæsar, or of Napoleon will bear a comparison with that short period, the most brilliant in the history of Prussia and of Frederic. Yet at this time the scanty leisure of the illustrious warrior was employed in producing odes and epistles a little better than Cibber's and a little worse than Hayley's. Here and there a manly sentiment which deserves to be in prose makes its appearance in company with Prometheus and Orpheus, Elysium and Acheron, the plaintive Philomel, the poppies of Morpheus, and all the other frippery which, like a robe tossed by a proud beauty to her waiting-woman, has long been contemptuously abandoned by genius to mediocrity. We hardly know any instance of the strength and weakness of human nature so striking and so grotesque as the character of this haughty, vigilant, resolute, sagacious blue-stocking, half Mithridates and half Trissotin, bearing up against a world in arms, with an ounce of poison in one pocket and a quire of bad verses in the other.

Frederic had some time before made advances towards a reconciliation with Voltaire ; and some civil letters had passed between them. After the battle of Kolin their epistolary intercourse became, at least in seeming, friendly and confidential. We do not know any collection of Letters which throws so much light on the darkest and most intricate parts of human nature as the correspondence of these strange beings after they had exchanged forgiveness. Both felt that the quarrel had lowered them in the public estimation. They admired each other. They stood in need of each other. The Great King wished to be handed down to posterity by the Great Writer. The Great Writer felt himself exalted by the homage of the Great King. Yet the wounds which they had inflicted on each other were too deep to be effaced, or even perfectly healed. Not only did the scars remain ; the sore places often festered and bled afresh. The letters consisted, for the most part, of compliments, thanks, offers of service, assurances of attachment. But if anything brought back to Frederic's recollection the cunning and mischievous pranks by which Voltaire had provoked him, some expression of contempt and displeasure broke forth in the midst of eulogy. It was much worse when anything recalled to the mind of Voltaire the outrages which he and his kinswoman had suffered at Frankfort. All at once his flowing panegyric was turned into invective. "Remember how you behaved to me. For your sake I have lost the favor of my native king. For your sake I am an exile from my country. I loved you. I trusted myself to you. I had no wish but to end my life in your service. And what was my reward? Stripped of all that you had bestowed on me, the key,

the order, the pension, I was forced to fly from your territories. I was hunted as if I had been a deserter from your grenadiers. I was arrested, insulted, plundered. My niece was dragged through the mud of Frankfort by your soldiers, as if she had been some wretched follower of your camp. You have great talents. You have good qualities. But you have one odious vice. You delight in the abasement of your fellow-creatures. You have brought disgrace on the name of philosopher. You have given some color to the slander of the bigots, who say that no confidence can be placed in the justice or humanity of those who reject the Christian faith." Then the King answers, with less heat, but equal severity, "You know that you behaved shamefully in Prussia. It was well for you that you had to deal with a man so indulgent to the infirmities of genius as I am. You richly deserved to see the inside of a dungeon. Your talents are not more widely known than your faithlessness and your malevolence. The grave itself is no asylum from your spite. Maupertuis is dead ; but you still go on calumniating and deriding him, as if you had not made him miserable enough while he was living. Let us have no more of this. And, above all, let me hear no more of your niece. I am sick to death of her name. I can bear with your faults for the sake of your merits ; but she has not written Mahomet or Mérope."

An explosion of this kind, it might be supposed, would necessarily put an end to all amicable communication. But it was not so. After every outbreak of ill-humor this extraordinary pair became more loving than before, and exchanged compliments and assurances of mutual regard with a wonderful air of sincerity.

It may well be supposed that men who wrote thus to each other were not very guarded in what they said of each other. The English ambassador, Mitchell, who knew that the King of Prussia was constantly writing to Voltaire with the greatest freedom on the most important subjects, was amazed to hear his Majesty designate this highly favored correspondent as a bad-hearted fellow, the greatest rascal on the face of the earth. And the language which the poet held about the King was not much more respectful.

It would probably have puzzled Voltaire himself to say what was his real feeling towards Frederic. It was compounded of all sentiments from enmity to friendship and from scorn to admiration ; and the proportions in which these elements were mixed changed every moment. The old patriarch resembled the spoiled child who screams, stamps, cuffs, laughs, kisses, and cuddles within one quarter of an hour. His resentment was not extinguished ; yet he was not without sympathy for his old friend. As a Frenchman, he wished success to the arms of his country. As a philosopher, he was anxious for the stability of a throne on which a philosopher sat. He longed both to save and to humble Frederic. There was one way, and only one, in which all his conflicting feelings could at once be gratified. If Frederic were preserved by the interference of France, if it were known that for that interference he was indebted to the mediation of Voltaire, this would indeed be delicious revenge ; this would indeed be to heap coals of fire on that haughty head. Nor did the vain and restless poet think it impossible that he might, from his hermitage near the Alps, dictate peace to Europe. D'Estrées had quitted Hanover, and

the command of the French army had been intrusted to the Duke of Richelieu, a man whose chief distinction was derived from his success in gallantry. Richelieu was in truth the most eminent of that race of seducers by profession who furnished Crébillon the younger and Laclos with models for their heroes. In his earlier days the royal house itself had not been secure from his presumptuous love. He was believed to have carried his conquests into the family of Orleans ; and some suspected that he was not unconcerned in the mysterious remorse which embittered the last hours of the charming mother of Louis the Fifteenth. But the Duke was now sixty years old. With a heart deeply corrupted by vice, a head long accustomed to think only on trifles, an impaired constitution, an impaired fortune, and, worst of all, a very red nose, he was entering on a dull, frivolous, and unrespected old age. Without one qualification for military command, except that personal courage which was common between him and the whole nobility of France, he had been placed at the head of the army of Hanover ; and in that situation he did his best to repair, by extortion and corruption, the injury which he had done to his property by a life of dissolute profusion.

The Duke of Richelieu to the end of his life hated the philosophers as a sect, not for those parts of their system which a good and wise man would have condemned, but for their virtues, for their spirit of free inquiry, and for their hatred of those social abuses of which he was himself the personification. But he, like many of those who thought with him, excepted Voltaire from the list of proscribed writers. He frequently sent flattering letters to Ferney. He did the patriarch the

honor to borrow money of him, and even carried this condescending friendship so far as to forget to pay the interest. Voltaire thought that it might be in his power to bring the Duke and the King of Prussia into communication with each other. He wrote earnestly to both ; and he so far succeeded that a correspondence between them was commenced.

But it was to very different means that Frederic was to owe his deliverance. At the beginning of November, the net seemed to have closed completely round him. The Russians were in the field, and were spreading devastation through his eastern provinces. Silesia was overrun by the Austrians. A great French army was advancing from the west under the command of Marshal Soubise, a prince of the great Armorican House of Rohan. Berlin itself had been taken and plundered by the Croatians. Such was the situation from which Frederic extricated himself with dazzling glory in the short space of thirty days.

He marched first against Soubise. On the fifth of November the armies met at Rossbach. The French were two to one ; but they were ill disciplined, and their general was a dunce. The tactics of Frederic and the well-regulated valor of the Prussian troops obtained a complete victory. Seven thousand of the invaders were made prisoners. Their guns, their colors, their baggage, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Those who escaped fled as confusedly as a mob scattered by cavalry. Victorious in the West, the King turned his arms towards Silesia. In that quarter everything seemed to be lost. Breslau had fallen; and Charles of Lorraine, with a mighty power, held the whole province. On the fifth of December, exactly one month

after the battle of Rossbach, Frederic, with forty thousand men, and Prince Charles, at the head of not less than sixty thousand, met at Leuthen, hard by Breslau. The King, who was, in general, perhaps too much inclined to consider the common soldier as a mere machine, resorted, on this great day, to means resembling those which Bonaparte afterwards employed with such signal success for the purpose of stimulating military enthusiasm. The principal officers were convoked. Frederic addressed them with great force and pathos; and directed them to speak to their men as he had spoken to them. When the armies were set in battle array, the Prussian troops were in a state of fierce excitement; but their excitement showed itself after the fashion of a grave people. The columns advanced to the attack chanting, to the sound of drums and fifes, the rude hymns of the old Saxon Sternholds. They had never fought so well; nor had the genius of their chief ever been so conspicuous. "That battle," said Napoleon, "was a masterpiece. Of itself it is sufficient to entitle Frederic to a place in the first rank among generals." The victory was complete. Twenty-seven thousand Austrians were killed, wounded, or taken; fifty stand of colors, a hundred guns, four thousand wagons, fell into the hands of the Prussians. Breslau opened its gates; Silesia was reconquered; Charles of Lorraine retired to hide his shame and sorrow at Brussels; and Frederic allowed his troops to take some repose in winter-quarters, after a campaign to the vicissitudes of which it will be difficult to find any parallel in ancient or modern history.

The King's fame filled all the world. He had during the last year maintained a contest, on terms of advan-

tage, against three powers, the weakest of which had more than three times his resources. He had fought four great pitched battles against superior forces. Three of these battles he had gained ; and the defeat of Kolin, repaired as it had been, rather raised than lowered his military renown. The victory of Leuthen is, to this day, the proudest on the roll of Prussian fame. Leipsic, indeed, and Waterloo produced consequences more important to mankind. But the glory of Leipsic must be shared by the Prussians with the Austrians and Russians ; and at Waterloo the British infantry bore the burden and heat of the day. The victory of Rossbach was, in a military point of view, less honorable than that of Leuthen ; for it was gained over an incapable general and a disorganized army ; but the moral effect which it produced was immense. All the preceding triumphs of Frederic had been triumphs over Germans, and could excite no emotions of national pride among the German people. It was impossible that a Hessian or a Hanoverian could feel any patriotic exultation at hearing that Pomeranians had slaughtered Moravians, or that Saxon banners had been hung in the churches of Berlin. Indeed, though the military character of the Germans justly stood high throughout the world, they could boast of no great day which belonged to them as a people ; of no Agincourt, of no Bannockburn. Most of their victories had been gained over each other ; and their most splendid exploits against foreigners had been achieved under the command of Eugene, who was himself a foreigner. The news of the battle of Rossbach stirred the blood of the whole of the mighty population from the Alps to the Baltic, and from the borders of Courland to those

of Lorraine. Westphalia and Lower Saxony had been deluged by a great host of strangers, whose speech was unintelligible, and whose petulant and licentious manners had excited the strongest feelings of disgust and hatred. That great host had been put to flight by a small band of German warriors, led by a prince of German blood on the side of father and mother, and marked by the fair hair and the clear blue eye of Germany. Never since the dissolution of the empire of Charlemagne had the Teutonic race won such a field against the French. The tidings called forth a general burst of delight and pride from the whole of the great family which spoke the various dialects of the ancient language of Arminius. The fame of Frederic began to supply, in some degree, the place of a common government and of a common capital. It became a rallying-point for all true Germans, a subject of mutual congratulation to the Bavarian and the Westphalian, to the citizen of Frankfort and the citizen of Nuremberg. Then first it was manifest that the Germans were truly a nation. Then first was discernible that patriotic spirit which in 1813 achieved the great deliverance of Central Europe, and which still guards, and long will guard, against foreign ambition the old freedom of the Rhine.

Nor were the effects produced by that celebrated day merely political. The greatest masters of German poetry and eloquence have admitted that, though the Great King neither valued nor understood his native language, though he looked on France as the only seat of taste and philosophy, yet, in his own despite, he did much to emancipate the genius of his countrymen from the foreign yoke ; and that in the act of vanquishing Soubise he was unintentionally rousing the spirit which

soon began to question the literary precedence of Boileau and Voltaire. So strangely do events confound all the plans of man. A prince who read only French, who wrote only French, who aspired to rank as a French classic, became, quite unconsciously, the means of liberating half the Continent from the dominion of that French criticism of which he was himself, to the end of his life, a slave. Yet even the enthusiasm of Germany in favor of Frederic hardly equalled the enthusiasm of England. The birthday of our ally was celebrated with as much enthusiasm as that of our own sovereign ; and at night the streets of London were in a blaze with illuminations. Portraits of the Hero of Rossbach, with his cocked hat and his long pigtail, were in every house. An attentive observer will at this day find in the parlors of old-fashioned inns, and in the portfolios of print-sellers, twenty portraits of Frederic for one of George the Second. The sign-painters were everywhere employed in touching up Admiral Vernon into the King of Prussia. This enthusiasm was strong among religious people, and especially among the Methodists, who knew that the French and Austrians were Papists, and supposed Frederic to be the Joshua or Gideon of the Reformed faith. One of Whitefield's hearers, on the day on which thanks for the battle of Leuthen were returned at the Tabernacle, made the following exquisitely ludicrous entry in a diary, part of which has come down to us : " The Lord stirred up the King of Prussia and his soldiers to pray. They kept three fast-days, and spent about an hour praying and singing psalms before they engaged the enemy. Oh, how good it is to pray and fight ! " Some young Englishmen of rank

proposed to visit Germany as volunteers, for the purpose of learning the art of war under the greatest of commanders. This last proof of British attachment and admiration Frederic politely but firmly declined. His camp was no place for amateur students of military science. The Prussian discipline was rigorous even to cruelty. The officers, while in the field, were expected to practise an abstemiousness and self-denial such as was hardly surpassed by the most rigid monastic orders. However noble their birth, however high their rank in the service, they were not permitted to eat from anything better than pewter. It was a high crime even in a count and field-marshal to have a single silver spoon among his baggage. Gay young Englishmen of twenty thousand a year, accustomed to liberty and to luxury, would not easily submit to these Spartan restraints. The King could not venture to keep them in order as he kept his own subjects in order. Situated as he was with respect to England, he could not well imprison or shoot refractory Howards and Cavendishes. On the other hand, the example of a few fine gentlemen, attended by chariots and livery servants, eating in plate, and drinking Champagne and Tokay, was enough to corrupt his whole army. He thought it best to make a stand at first, and civilly refuse to admit such dangerous companions among his troops.

The help of England was bestowed in a manner far more useful and more acceptable. An annual subsidy of near seven hundred thousand pounds enabled the King to add probably more than fifty thousand men to his army. Pitt, now at the height of power and popularity, undertook the task of defending Western Germany against France, and asked Frederic only for the

loan of a general. The general selected was Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had attained high distinction in the Prussian service. He was put at the head of an army partly English, partly Hanoverian, partly composed of mercenaries hired from the petty princes of the empire. He soon vindicated the choice of the two allied courts, and proved himself the second general of the age.

Frederic passed the winter at Breslau in reading, writing, and preparing for the next campaign. The havoc which the war had made among his troops was rapidly repaired; and in the spring of 1758 he was again ready for the conflict. Prince Ferdinand kept the French in check. The King in the meantime, after attempting against the Austrians some operations which led to no very important result, marched to encounter the Russians, who, slaying, burning, and wasting wherever they turned, had penetrated into the heart of his realm. He gave them battle at Zorndorf, near Frankfort-on-the-Oder. The fight was long and bloody. Quarter was neither given nor taken ; for the Germans and Scythians regarded each other with bitter aversion, and the sight of the ravages committed by the half-savage invaders had incensed the King and his army. The Russians were overthrown with great slaughter ; and for a few months no further danger was to be apprehended from the East.

A day of thanksgiving was proclaimed by the King, and was celebrated with pride and delight by his people. The rejoicings in England were not less enthusiastic or less sincere. This may be selected as the point of time at which the military glory of Frederic reached the zenith. In the short space of three quarters of a

year he had won three great battles over the armies of three mighty and warlike monarchies—France, Austria, and Russia.

But it was decreed that the temper of that strong mind should be tried by both extremes of fortune in rapid succession. Close upon this series of triumphs came a series of disasters such as would have blighted the fame and broken the heart of almost any other commander. Yet Frederic, in the midst of his calamities, was still an object of admiration to his subjects, his allies, and his enemies. Overwhelmed by adversity, sick of life, he still maintained the contest, greater in defeat, in flight, and in what seemed hopeless ruin than on the fields of his proudest victories.

Having vanquished the Russians, he hastened into Saxony to oppose the troops of the Empress Queen, commanded by Daun, the most cautious, and Laudon, the most inventive and enterprising, of her generals. These two celebrated commanders agreed on a scheme in which the prudence of the one and the vigor of the other seem to have been happily combined. At dead of night they surprised the King in his camp at Hochkirchen. His presence of mind saved his troops from destruction ; but nothing could save them from defeat and severe loss. Marshal Keith was among the slain. The first roar of the guns roused the noble exile from his rest, and he was instantly in the front of the battle. He received a dangerous wound, but refused to quit the field, and was in the act of rallying his broken troops when an Austrian bullet terminated his checkered and eventful life.

The misfortune was serious. But of all generals Frederic understood best how to repair defeat, and

Daun understood least how to improve victory. In a few days the Prussian army was as formidable as before the battle. The prospect was, however, gloomy. An Austrian army under General Harsch had invaded Silesia and invested the fortress of Neisse. Daun, after his success at Hochkirchen, had written to Harsch in very confident terms: "Go on with your operations against Neisse. Be quite at ease as to the King. I will give a good account of him." In truth, the position of the Prussians was full of difficulties. Between them and Silesia lay the victorious army of Daun. It was not easy for them to reach Silesia at all. If they did reach it, they left Saxony exposed to the Austrians. But the vigor and activity of Frederic surmounted every obstacle. He made a circuitous march of extraordinary rapidity, passed Daun, hastened into Silesia, raised the siege of Neisse, and drove Harsch into Bohemia. Daun availed himself of the King's absence to attack Dresden. The Prussians defended it desperately. The inhabitants of that wealthy and polished capital begged in vain for mercy from the garrison within and from the besiegers without. The beautiful suburbs were burned to the ground. It was clear that the town, if won at all, would be won street by street by the bayonet. At this conjuncture came news that Frederic, having cleared Silesia of his enemies, was returning by forced marches into Saxony. Daun retired from before Dresden, and fell back into the Austrian territories. The King, over heaps of ruins, made his triumphant entry into the unhappy metropolis, which had so cruelly expiated the weak and perfidious policy of its sovereign. It was now the twentieth of November. The cold weather suspended military operations;

and the King again took up his winter-quarters at Breslau.

The third of the seven terrible years was over ; and Frederic still stood his ground. He had been recently tried by domestic as well as by military disasters. On the fourteenth of October, the day on which he was defeated at Hochkirchen—the day on the anniversary of which, forty-eight years later, a defeat far more tremendous laid the Prussian monarchy in the dust—died Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth. From the accounts which we have of her, by her own hand and by the hands of the most discerning of her contemporaries, we should pronounce her to have been coarse, indelicate, and a good hater, but not destitute of kind and generous feelings. Her mind, naturally strong and observant, had been highly cultivated ; and she was, and deserved to be, Frederic's favorite sister. He felt the loss as much as it was in his iron nature to feel the loss of anything but a province or a battle.

At Breslau, during the winter, he was indefatigable in his poetical labors. The most spirited lines, perhaps, that he ever wrote are to be found in a bitter lampoon on Louis and Madame de Pompadour which he composed at this time and sent to Voltaire. The verses were, indeed, so good that Voltaire was afraid that he might himself be suspected of having written them, or at least of having corrected them ; and, partly from fright, partly, we fear, from love of mischief, sent them to the Duke of Choiseul, then Prime-minister of France. Choiseul very wisely determined to encounter Frederic at Frederic's own weapons, and applied for assistance to Palissot, who had some skill as a versifier and some little talent for satire. Palissot produced some very

stinging lines on the moral and literary character of Frederic, and these lines the Duke sent to Voltaire. This war of couplets, following close on the carnage of Zorndorf and the conflagration of Dresden, illustrates well the strangely compounded character of the King of Prussia.

At this moment he was assailed by a new enemy. Benedict the Fourteenth, the best and wisest of the two hundred and fifty successors of St. Peter, was no more. During the short interval between his reign and that of his disciple Ganganelli, the chief seat in the Church of Rome was filled by Rezzonico, who took the name of Clement the Thirteenth. This absurd priest determined to try what the weight of his authority could effect in favor of the orthodox Maria Theresa against a heretic king. At the high-mass on Christmas-day, a sword with a rich belt and scabbard, a hat of crimson velvet lined with ermine, and a dove of pearls, the mystic symbol of the Divine Comforter, were solemnly blessed by the Supreme Pontiff, and were sent with great ceremony to Marshal Daun, the conqueror of Kolin and Hochkirchen. This mark of favor had more than once been bestowed by the popes on the great champions of the faith. Similar honors had been paid, more than six centuries earlier, by Urban the Second to Godfrey of Bouillon. Similar honors had been conferred on Alba for destroying the liberties of the Low Countries, and on John Sobieski after the deliverance of Vienna. But the presents which were received with profound reverence by the Baron of the Holy Sepulchre in the eleventh century, and which had not wholly lost their value even in the seventeenth century, appeared inexpressibly ridiculous to a generation which

read Montesquieu and Voltaire. Frederic wrote sarcastic verses on the gifts, the giver, and the receiver. But the public wanted no prompter; and a universal roar of laughter from Petersburg to Lisbon reminded the Vatican that the age of crusades was over.

The fourth campaign, the most disastrous of all the campaigns of this fearful war, had now opened. The Austrians filled Saxony and menaced Berlin. The Russians defeated the King's generals on the Oder, threatened Silesia, effected a junction with Laudon, and entrenched themselves strongly at Kunersdorf. Frederic hastened to attack them. A great battle was fought. During the earlier part of the day everything yielded to the impetuosity of the Prussians and to the skill of their chief. The lines were forced. Half the Russian guns were taken. The King sent off a courier to Berlin with two lines announcing a complete victory. But in the meantime the stubborn Russians, defeated yet unbroken, had taken up their stand in an almost impregnable position, on an eminence where the Jews of Frankfort were wont to bury their dead. Here the battle recommenced. The Prussian infantry, exhausted by six hours of hard fighting under a sun which equalled the tropical heat, were yet brought up repeatedly to the attack, but in vain. The King led three charges in person. Two horses were killed under him. The officers of his staff fell all round him. His coat was pierced by several bullets. All was in vain. His infantry were driven back with frightful slaughter. Terror began to spread fast from man to man. At that moment the fiery cavalry of Laudon, still fresh, rushed on the wavering ranks. Then followed a universal rout. Frederic himself was on the

point of falling into the hands of the conquerors, and was with difficulty saved by a gallant officer, who, at the head of a handful of Hussars, made a good diversion of a few minutes. Shattered in body, shattered in mind, the King reached that night a village which the Cossacks had plundered ; and there, in a ruined and deserted farm-house, flung himself on a heap of straw. He had sent to Berlin a second despatch very different from the first : " Let the royal family leave Berlin. Send the archives to Potsdam. The town may make terms with the enemy."

The defeat was, in truth, overwhelming. Of fifty thousand men who had that morning marched under the black eagles, not three thousand remained together. The King bethought him again of his corrosive sublimate, and wrote to bid adieu to his friends, and to give directions as to the measures to be taken in the event of his death. " I have no resource left "—such is the language of one of his letters—" all is lost. I will not survive the ruin of my country. Farewell forever."

But the mutual jealousies of the confederates prevented them from following up their victory. They lost a few days in loitering and squabbling ; and a few days improved by Frederic were worth more than the years of other men. On the morning after the battle he had got together eighteen thousand of his troops. Very soon his force amounted to thirty thousand. Guns were procured from the neighboring fortresses ; and there was again an army. Berlin was for the present safe ; but calamities came pouring on the King in uninterrupted succession. One of his generals, with a large body of troops, was taken at Maxen ; another was defeated at Meissen ; and when at length the cam-

paign of 1759 closed, in the midst of a rigorous winter, the situation of Prussia appeared desperate. The only consoling circumstance was that, in the West, Ferdinand of Brunswick had been more fortunate than his master ; and, by a series of exploits of which the battle of Minden was the most glorious, had removed all apprehension of danger on the side of France.

The fifth year was now about to commence. It seemed impossible that the Prussian territories, repeatedly devastated by hundreds of thousands of invaders, could longer support the contest. But the King carried on war as no European power has ever carried on war, except the Committee of Public Safety during the great agony of the French Revolution. He governed his kingdom as he would have governed a besieged town, not caring to what extent property was destroyed or the pursuits of civil life suspended, so that he did but make head against the enemy. As long as there was a man left in Prussia, that man might carry a musket ; as long as there was a horse left, that horse might draw artillery. The coin was debased, the civil functionaries were left unpaid ; in some provinces civil government altogether ceased to exist. But there were still rye bread and potatoes ; there were still lead and gunpowder ; and while the means of sustaining and destroying life remained Frederic was determined to fight it out to the very last.

The earlier part of the campaign of 1760 was unfavorable to him. Berlin was again occupied by the enemy. Great contributions were levied on the inhabitants, and the royal palace was plundered. But at length, after two years of calamity, victory came back to his arms. At Lignitz he gained a great battle over Laudon ; at

Torgau, after a day of horrible carnage, he triumphed over Daun. The fifth year closed, and still the event was in suspense. In the countries where the war had raged the misery and exhaustion were more appalling than ever; but still there were left men and beasts, arms and food, and still Frederic fought on. In truth, he had now been baited into savageness. His heart was ulcerated with hatred. The implacable resentment with which his enemies persecuted him, though originally provoked by his own unprincipled ambition, excited in him a thirst for vengeance which he did not even attempt to conceal. "It is hard," he says in one of his letters, "for man to bear what I bear. I begin to feel that, as the Italians say, revenge is a pleasure for the gods. My philosophy is worn out by suffering. I am no saint, like those of whom we read in the legends; and I will own that I should die content if only I could first inflict a portion of the misery which I endure."

Borne up by such feelings, he struggled with various success, but constant glory, through the campaign of 1761. On the whole, the result of this campaign was disastrous to Prussia. No great battle was gained by the enemy; but, in spite of the desperate bounds of the hunted tiger, the circle of pursuers was fast closing round him. Laudon had surprised the important fortress of Schweidnitz. With that fortress, half of Silesia, and the command of the most important defiles through the mountains, had been transferred to the Austrians. The Russians had overpowered the King's generals in Pomerania. The country was so completely desolated that he began, by his own confession, to look round him with blank despair, unable to imagine where recruits, horses, or provisions were to be found.

Just at this time two great events brought on a complete change in the relations of almost all the powers of Europe. One of those events was the retirement of Mr. Pitt from office ; the other was the death of the Empress Elizabeth of Russia.

The retirement of Pitt seemed to be an omen of utter ruin to the House of Brandenburg. His proud and vehement nature was incapable of anything that looked like either fear or treachery. He had often declared that while he was in power England should never make a Peace of Utrecht ; should never, for any selfish object, abandon an ally, even in the last extremity of distress. The Continental war was his own war. He had been bold enough—he who in former times had attacked with irresistible powers of oratory the Hanoverian policy of Carteret and the German subsidies of Newcastle—to declare that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire, and that he would conquer America in Germany. He had fallen ; and the power which he had exercised, not always with discretion, but always with vigor and genius, had devolved on a favorite who was the representative of the Tory party —of the party which had thwarted William, which had persecuted Marlborough, and which had given up the Catalans to the vengeance of Philip of Anjou. To make peace with France, to shake off, with all, or more than all, the speed compatible with decency, every Continental connection—these were among the chief objects of the new Minister. The policy then followed inspired Frederic with an unjust but deep and bitter aversion to the English name, and produced effects which are still felt throughout the civilized world. To that policy it was owing that, some years later, Eng-

land could not find on the whole Continent a single ally to stand by her, in her extreme need, against the House of Bourbon. To that policy it was owing that Frederic, alienated from England, was compelled to connect himself closely, during his later years, with Russia, and was induced to assist in that great crime, the fruitful parent of other great crimes, the first partition of Poland.

Scarcely had the retreat of Mr. Pitt deprived Prussia of her only friend when the death of Elizabeth produced an entire revolution in the politics of the North. The Grand-duke Peter, her nephew, who now ascended the Russian throne, was not merely free from the prejudices which his aunt had entertained against Frederic, but was a worshipper, a servile imitator, of the Great King. The days of the new Czar's government were few and evil, but sufficient to produce a change in the whole state of Christendom. He set the Prussian prisoners at liberty, fitted them out decently, and sent them back to their master; he withdrew his troops from the provinces which Elizabeth had decided on incorporating with her dominions; and he absolved all those Prussian subjects who had been compelled to swear fealty to Russia from their engagements.

Not content with concluding peace on terms favorable to Prussia, he solicited rank in the Prussian service, dressed himself in a Prussian uniform, wore the Black Eagle of Prussia on his breast, made preparations for visiting Prussia in order to have an interview with the object of his idolatry, and actually sent fifteen thousand excellent troops to reinforce the shattered army of Frederic. Thus strengthened, the King speedily repaired the losses of the preceding year, re-

conquered Silesia, defeated Daun at Buckersdorf, invested and retook Schweidnitz, and at the close of the year presented to the forces of Maria Theresa a front as formidable as before the great reverses of 1759. Before the end of the campaign, his friend the Emperor Peter, having, by a series of absurd insults to the institutions, manners, and feelings of his people, united them in hostility to his person and government, was deposed and murdered. The Empress, who, under the title of Catherine the Second, now assumed the supreme power, was at the commencement of her administration by no means partial to Frederic, and refused to permit her troops to remain under his command. But she observed the peace made by her husband ; and Prussia was no longer threatened by danger from the East.

England and France at the same time paired off together. They concluded a treaty by which they bound themselves to observe neutrality with respect to the German war. Thus the coalitions on both sides were dissolved ; and the original enemies, Austria and Prussia, remained alone confronting each other.

Austria had undoubtedly far greater means than Prussia, and was less exhausted by hostilities ; yet it seemed hardly possible that Austria could effect alone what she had in vain attempted to effect when supported by France, on the one side, and by Russia, on the other. Danger also began to menace the imperial house from another quarter. The Ottoman Porte held threatening language, and a hundred thousand Turks were mustered on the frontiers of Hungary. The proud and revengeful spirit of the Empress Queen at length gave way ; and in February, 1763, the Peace of Hubertsburg put an end to the conflict which had

during seven years devastated Germany. The King ceded nothing. The whole Continent in arms had proved unable to tear Silesia from that iron grasp.

The war was over. Frederic was safe. His glory was beyond the reach of envy. If he had not made conquests as vast as those of Alexander, of Cæsar, and of Napoleon ; if he had not on fields of battle enjoyed the constant success of Marlborough and Wellington, he had yet given an example unrivalled in history of what capacity and resolution can effect against the greatest superiority of power and the utmost spite of fortune. He entered Berlin in triumph, after an absence of more than six years. The streets were brilliantly lighted up ; and, as he passed along in an open carriage with Ferdinand of Brunswick at his side, the multitude saluted him with loud praises and blessings. He was moved by those marks of attachment, and repeatedly exclaimed " Long live my dear people! Long live my children ! " Yet, even in the midst of that gay spectacle, he could not but perceive everywhere the traces of destruction and decay. The city had been more than once plundered. The population had considerably diminished. Berlin, however, had suffered little when compared with most parts of the kingdom. The ruin of private fortunes, the distress of all ranks, was such as might appall the firmest mind. Almost every province had been the seat of war, and of war conducted with merciless ferocity. Clouds of Croatians had descended on Silesia. Tens of thousands of Cossacks had been let loose on Pomerania and Brandenburg. The mere contributions levied by the invaders amounted, it was said, to more than a hundred millions of dollars ; and the value of what they extorted was

probably much less than the value of what they destroyed. The fields lay uncultivated. The very seed-corn had been devoured in the madness of hunger. Famine, and contagious maladies produced by famine, had swept away the herds and flocks; and there was reason to fear that a great pestilence among the human race was likely to follow in the train of that tremendous war. Near fifteen thousand houses had been burned to the ground. The population of the kingdom had in seven years decreased to the frightful extent of ten per cent. A sixth of the males capable of bearing arms had actually perished on the field of battle. In some districts no laborers, except women, were seen in the fields at harvest-time. In others the traveller passed, shuddering, through a succession of silent villages in which not a single inhabitant remained. The currency had been debased; the authority of laws and magistrates had been suspended; the whole social system was deranged. For, during that convulsive struggle everything that was not military violence was anarchy. Even the army was disorganized. Some great generals and a crowd of excellent officers had fallen, and it had been impossible to supply their place. The difficulty of finding recruits had, towards the close of the war, been so great that selection and rejection were impossible. Whole battalions were composed of deserters or of prisoners. It was hardly to be hoped that thirty years of repose and industry would repair the ruin produced by seven years of havoc. One consolatory circumstance, indeed, there was. No debt had been incurred. The burdens of the war had been terrible, almost insupportable; but no arrear was left to embarrass the finances in time of peace.

Here, for the present, we must pause. We have accompanied Frederic to the close of his career as a warrior. Possibly when these Memoirs are completed we may resume the consideration of his character, and give some account of his domestic and foreign policy, and of his private habits, during the many years of tranquillity which followed the Seven Years' War.

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